

From the Chief Medical Officer  
Dr Michael McBride



Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**

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**HSS(MD)19/2010**

AN ROINN

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta  
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

MÁNNYSTRIE O

**Poustie, Resydènter Heisin  
an Fowk Siccar**

Chief Executive of PHA  
Chief Executive of HSCB  
Chief Executives of HSC Trusts  
Director of Nursing and AHP, PHA  
Director of Public Health/Medical Director, PHA  
Family Practitioner Service Leads (*for onward  
distribution to Medical Advisors*)  
Medical Directors of HSC Trusts (*for onward  
distribution to consultants in paediatrics,  
paediatric orthopaedics, paediatric  
ophthalmology, and paediatric OHN*)  
Directors of Nursing, HSC Trusts  
Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts (*for  
onward distribution to all nurses and midwives  
working within children's services*)  
All General Practitioners (*including GP locums*)

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Your Ref:  
Our Ref: HSS(MD)19/2010  
Date: 28 May 2010

Dear Colleague,

**UPDATE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND REVIEWED CHILD HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMME: 'Healthy Child, Healthy Future' a Framework for the Universal Child Health Promotion Programme in Northern Ireland.**

**Summary**

1. The purpose of this letter is to advise you that the Northern Ireland Child Health Promotion Programme (CHPP) has been updated. The document, known as 'Healthy Child, Healthy Future: A Framework for the Universal Child Health Promotion Programme in Northern Ireland, is attached and also available at: [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/healthychildhealthyfuture.pdf](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/healthychildhealthyfuture.pdf)
2. The Public Health Agency should, in partnership with the Health and Social Care Board, Trusts and General Practitioners, lead the roll out of this updated programme which **must be fully implemented by 31 March 2011**.

## Background

3. The existing CHPP within Northern Ireland, was introduced in 2006, and is based on 'Health for All Children' (Hall and Elliman, 2006). In November 2008, the Health for All Children (Hall 4) Regional Steering Group initiated work to update the Northern Ireland CHPP taking account of The Child Health Promotion Programme published by the Department of Health, England, and issued for implementation in March 2008.

## Healthy Child, Healthy Future

4. The update of the programme has now been completed and the document 'Healthy Child, Healthy Future: A Framework for the Universal Child Health Promotion Programme in Northern Ireland,' is attached. The framework is intended to strengthen not replace the existing programme and is recognised as being central to securing improvements in child health across a range of issues. Effective implementation will lead to:-
  - Strong parent – child attachments, positive parenting resulting in better social and emotional well being.
  - Care that helps keep children healthy and safe.
  - Healthy eating and increased activity leading to a reduction in obesity.
  - Prevention of serious and communicable diseases.
  - Increased rates of initiation and maintenance of breast feeding.
  - Readiness for school and increased learning.
  - Early recognition of growth disorders and risk factors for obesity.
  - Early detection of and actions to address developmental delay, abnormalities and ill health, and concerns about safety.
  - Identification of factors that could influence health and well-being in families.
  - Better short and long term outcomes for children who are at risk of social exclusion.
5. The framework sets out a core programme of child health contacts that every family can expect, wherever they live in Northern Ireland. It recognises that individual families are different and that there is a need to be flexible and innovative to ensure that all families are able to access and benefit from the advice, support and services that are available to them.

## Action required:

6. The Public Health Agency should, in partnership with the Health and Social Care Board, Trusts, General Practitioners and other relevant stakeholders, lead in taking forward implementation of the updated programme **which must be fully in place by 31 March 2011.**

7. As part of this important development the PHA and Trusts should work in collaboration to ensure that the Child Health System (CHS) is updated to reflect programme changes.
8. The Public Health Agency is asked to develop a mechanism which ensures that existing standards and guidelines for practice are updated on a regular basis to support professionals in the delivery of the Healthy Child, Healthy Future programme to secure regional consistency in the delivery of services. This could take the form of a web-based portfolio which contains detailed guidance or which signposts practitioners to relevant, evidence based and updated sources of information.
9. In parallel with this work and in support of the programme, the Family Health Assessment (FHA) undertaken by health visitors has been updated so that it now sits within the UNOCINI Thresholds of Need Model. The PHA should include the new FHA within the implementation process of the updated Child Health Promotion Programme, and work with the Board/Trusts to secure the continued development and implementation of FHA as an electronic record.
10. Recommendations from the Action Plan of the Review of Autism Spectrum Disorder services make reference to the introduction of a two year contact in the home by health visitors. This must continue to be considered as a priority within the implementation to ensure timely and appropriate responses from the HSC.
11. Trusts must ensure that they have internal mechanisms in place to effectively support the implementation of the updated programme and that staff are fully updated and trained to deliver it. There should be full engagement with stakeholders, including Service Users, to ensure they have been advised of any changes within the programme.
12. The Personal Child Health Record (PCHR) is also being updated as part of this process therefore supplies of the existing record must be available until the updated programme is introduced after which the PHA should ensure timely update and introduction of new versions of the PCHR.

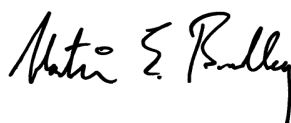
For further information please contact Angela McLernon, Nursing Officer, DHSSPS, by e mail at: - [angela.mclernon@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:angela.mclernon@dhsspsni.gov.uk) or by telephoning (028) 9052 0794.

Yours sincerely



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**Michael McBride**  
Chief Medical Officer



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**Martin Bradley**  
Chief Nursing Officer

This letter is available at [www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk) and also on the DHSSPS Extranet which can be accessed directly at <http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk> or by going through the HPSS Web at <http://www.n-i.nhs.uk> and clicking on DHSSPS.

cc Professor Paddy Johnston, Dean, Head of School of Medicine, Dentistry and  
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