



*Welcome to the Winter edition of Workforce Planning News*

## Workforce Focus

Since the previous edition of the workforce planning news the comprehensive reviews of the Medical and Social Services workforces received Ministerial endorsement and have been published on the DHSSPS Internet site.

The reports contain a number of recommendations to secure the future of the respective workforces. We hope you find the reports interesting and informative and we would be pleased to receive comments on any of the issues contained within the reports, via email to [wpu@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:wpu@dhsspsni.gov.uk).

Currently three reviews are on-going. Reviews of the Radiography and Physiotherapy workforces are nearing completion and will be published in the near future.

In addition in the case of physiotherapy we have been notified of potential difficulties facing newly qualified graduates, in gaining employment in the UK.

At the request of the Minister, a taskforce was established to examine the situation in Northern Ireland. To date, Northern Ireland does not appear to have the crisis reported in England, however we would ask you to alert us to any early warning signs that the employment situation for graduates is becoming more difficult in Northern Ireland, by emailing to [wpu@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:wpu@dhsspsni.gov.uk).

The Clinical Psychology Workforce Review commenced late last year. The Advisory Group was re-convened in September and through a series of meetings they have assisted greatly in determining the proposed structure and content of the final report. Focus Groups were held in February with Clinical Psychology Department Heads to provide further insight into the current issues facing the clinical psychology workforce.

As always, thank you to all our Advisory Group members, your willingness to contribute is invaluable in providing comprehensive, useful reports.

### *Workforce Web-Wise*

The Workforce Planning Unit Website has now gone live, providing greater accessibility to the workforce planning reviews, both comprehensive and update reviews; editions of Workforce Planning News, the HR monitoring reports; and HPSS careers information. You can access the Website at <http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hrd/wpu.htm>. The site will continue to be regularly updated, however as always, if you are unable to locate a specific document, email your request to [wpu@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:wpu@dhsspsni.gov.uk) and we will be glad to assist.

## ***Workforce Planning and RPA***

Over the past year a number of people have asked whether the Department will continue carrying out regional workforce planning during the organisational change phase of the RPA.

Although there have been staff reductions in Workforce Planning Unit, the initiative will continue throughout the organisational changes. Once the Regional Authority is established, it is likely that the practical aspects of carrying out the workforce reviews will become the responsibility of the Authority, possibly with a policy element remaining with the Department. This has not yet been decided however and in the meantime we will continue with the programme of reviews of the clinical professional groups.

## ***Future arrangements***

The reorganisation accompanying RPA offers an opportunity to review the methodology used to carry out regional workforce planning, particularly as regards the organisational contribution of the trusts. To date the methodology has involved working with an Advisory Group for each review, the membership being drawn from the professional area under review, HR, Staff Side and voluntary/private sectors as appropriate. We have not to date required Trusts to submit workforce plans associated with their service development and delivery plans. The current climate of service modernisation however, makes it particularly difficult to accurately predict the number of practitioners that will be required to deliver service into the future. It is possible that Trusts will be asked to carry out more comprehensive workforce planning at organisational level, and provide these to assist the regional planning exercises. These developments are possibilities for the future. Meanwhile this work continues as before and we will advise when there are to be any changes to the arrangements.

*Many thanks for the continuing support of the many HPSS and other sector representatives who work with us on these reviews.*

### **Central Workforce Planning Group**

During 2006 themed workshops were run in place of meetings of the Central Workforce Planning Group. This approach was taken to explore which would be the more useful since there had been an ongoing significantly low attendance at meetings by members of the group. We have however been asked to re-instate the Central Workforce Planning Group.

With representatives drawn from the HPSS Boards, Trusts and Agencies, Education, Staff Side, Private and Voluntary Sector as well as different Departmental Directorates, this group comprised people working at a senior, strategic decision-making level.

We are now revisiting the membership of this group and will shortly contact existing and potential new members regarding whether or not they wish to be involved in the group's work. Essentially the group will exist both for information-sharing on trends within the workforce which should potentially be explored in the reviews, keeping up to date with the progress of ongoing reviews and the emerging findings, and providing organisational support and commitment to taking forward the recommendations flowing from the reviews.

We will arrange biannual meetings of the group and will advise of the dates and arrangements for the year ahead.

## HPSS Careers Jobscene 2006

The Annual **Job Scene Northern Ireland** Event took place in the Odyssey Arena, Belfast on 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> September. The Event was well attended by students, careers advisors and members of the public looking for a change of career.



We would like to thank Craigavon and Banbridge, South and East Belfast, Green Park, Craigavon Area, United Hospitals, Ulster Community Trusts and the Royal College of Midwives for their participation as exhibitors.

The Department intends to exhibit in the 2007 event also and further information on this will follow later in the year.



### Application of the Health Awards Seminar - 5 April 2006

The Department in association with Skills for Health (the sector skills council for health across the four countries of the UK) arranged a half-day seminar to illustrate "Application of the Health Awards" on 5 April 2006.

Vicky Yearsley and Danielle Price from Skills for Health spoke on the background to skills for health, the development and purpose of the Health Awards, links to the Health and Social Care Awards, progression and relation to other qualifications and future review and development of the awards. Linda Davison of Down Lisburn HSS trust presented a comparison with existing awards and gave insight into local experience of the Health Awards.

Feedback received was positive. Trusts commented that the session had generated enthusiasm to become involved and gave a good overview of the pathways.

One organisation advised that they have already commenced the new Health Care Awards and a further 6 confirmed that they would make use of the awards in the future.

We extend our thanks to all those who took part.



(L-R) Stephanie Ross, Jill Stewart, Linda Davison, Down Lisburn Trust; Vicky Yearsley, Danielle Price, Skills for Health

We would like to hear of local workforce planning and career initiatives taking place in your area, so please keep us informed by e-mailing your news to [wpu@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:wpu@dhsspsni.gov.uk).

The Opportunity Now Regional Forum was established in 1997 and since that time many officers from a variety of professions have helped drive forward its agenda through membership of the Forum and support for its activities.

Gender equality remains the main focus and progress has been made through research projects, learning & development opportunities, concentrating on the work life balance agenda and organisation of workshops. Within the campaign we are pleased to acknowledge positive progress and feedback in these areas.

DHSSPS continue to sponsor the campaign.

Opportunity Now, throughout 2007 will be hosting a selection of events including:

- Two Work-Life Balance Workshops,
- Two Women and Self- Esteem events,



The Work-Life Balance events have been developed to support employers to respond to increasing demands in a way that will meet the work-life balance needs of their current and future workforce. The events are designed to be interactive, with delegates working through a series of practical exercises, which should ultimately lead to the development of a framework and action plan to help implement and improve work-life balance within your organisation.

The Women and Self- Esteem & Confidence workshops are centred on promoting self-esteem which enhances every aspect of a person's life. This programme will be delivered by officers from Westcare Business Service Health Promotion Department. Staff from all disciplines are encouraged to attend as it will enable them to see how self-esteem can be improved for greater satisfaction and success in life.

For information on Opportunity Now Events please contact [frances.flood@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:frances.flood@dhsspsni.gov.uk)

### Departures & Arrivals!

Congratulations to David Bingham on his appointment as Director of Workforce & HR Development (Designate) of the HSSA. The Department and the Authority have yet to decide on the detail of the responsibilities for workforce planning post 2008, when the HSSA becomes fully operational. Within Workforce Planning Unit, Janet Moore, Billy Reynolds and Alison Burne have moved to other areas of work within the NICS and Melanie McClurg has joined the unit. Frances Flood has taken up post as Opportunity Now Co-ordinator during the placement year of her degree course.

For information on any of the Unit's activities contact us at:

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