

School Nurses Forum NEWSLETTER

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Send contributions for the next
newsletter by 28 August 2008 to:

Barbara Richardson-Todd
Email: barbara.rt@virgin.net

Letter from the Chair

JOY WINKS reflects on a busy year and exciting times ahead.

Welcome to your spring newsletter. The forum steering committee has continued to work on your behalf with many different government and non-governmental organisations, as well as charities.

We also have a new member of the group who works in Northern Ireland. It is great to have another country represented. There were plenty of applicants for the co-opted place on the committee, and I thank those who applied – most of those applicants have now agreed to act as link members.

Web news

The forum has submitted its 2008/09 operational plan for verification within the RCN and will put this online as soon as possible. Even after writing the plan, when reading it, I was quite amazed at the amount and variety of work being done by, and for, school nurses.

From last year's plan, we have just completed a web-based toolkit for school nurses, which will be online very soon. It contains plenty of useful links and ideas for practice. Teething problems with the RCN web pages should now subside, as two committee members have agreed to be our web editors, working with the RCN web team.

On the up?

Looking at my previous letters, there seemed to be a feeling of negativity around funding and support for school nurses around the UK. I am very happy to say that there seems to have been a general upturn in thinking (which we always knew should happen) and many commissioning organisations are now re-investing in school nursing.

Please write to us and let us know what is happening in your area, and what effect that is having on outcomes for children and young people. It might even be worth a free conference place for you if you enter the competition in this newsletter (see page three). The School Nurses Forum Conference, held on 1 March 2008, was excellent (see page two). A full and varied programme made for a busy, thought-provoking, and enjoyable day, and I look forward to the next conference in August.

Most of the committee will be at Congress in Bournemouth in April – if you are attending, please make yourself known to us. I hope you enjoy the rest of this newsletter. Remember – it is yours and contributions are always welcome.

Letter from the Editor

A rosy outlook for spring

BARBARA RICHARDSON-TODD on the future of school nursing.

The HPV vaccination programme has been occupying my thoughts for the past months, and will continue to occupy those to come no doubt (see article on page three). Anyone who has any information they would like to share on this, please email me and I will send it on to those interested.

I have been most impressed by the *Medical conditions at school* pack. If you haven't received one, I'd advise you to find it. We

have been through some tough times in school nursing in the last few years, but I am optimistic. Now that most primary care trusts (PCTs) are getting out of the red, I believe that things will improve for us and our colleagues in health visiting.

Write and let me know what your school nurses are doing and what is happening in your localities – who knows, you may win a free conference place! (See page three).

Drug education in England

The Drug Education Forum is the umbrella body for national organisations committed to improving the effectiveness and profile of drug education in England. It currently has 28 members from across education, substance misuse charities, and the statutory sectors and is pleased to welcome the RCN School Nurses Forum to that number. Drug Education Forum Coordinator ANDREW BROWN reports.

The forum

The forum meets three times a year to look at drug and alcohol issues and to be briefed on the policy landscape in which decisions are being taken. We are seen as an important voice on the issue by central government and we use our influence to try and improve the status of drug education across the range of educational settings, including schools, further education colleges, youth services and in the home.

In between meetings, we develop briefing papers (freely available from our website) and provide an information service to members and a wider audience that covers the way that the media and others portray our field.

Drug and alcohol use

Looking at the media, you'd be forgiven for thinking that young people's drug misuse is growing exponentially and that our schools are awash with illegal drugs. The figures that are

available suggest a slightly more complex relationship, with most young people not using illegal drugs and a small proportion having a very serious problem. For example, the last annual survey of young people found (Information Centre, 2007):

- 35 per cent of young people report having been offered illegal drugs – down from 42 per cent in 2001
- 24 per cent say they have taken an illegal drug at least once. Of these:
 - 17 per cent had taken drugs in the last year
 - 9 per cent had taken drugs in the last month.

Even with alcohol, the picture is complicated. For example, 45 per cent of young people said they had never had a drink. However, amongst those who are drinking regularly (and 15 per cent say they drink at least once a week), the amount that is being consumed has risen considerably, as have the numbers of young people who need hospital



treatment as a result of their misuse of alcohol.

How education fits in

Understanding these figures is important if we are to deliver effective drug education. Equally important is an appreciation of the role of drug education and the outcomes that it can help to deliver.

The evidence about what works in drug education depends on what we mean by 'works'. Often, education is asked to bear the burden of changing young people's behaviour and – when that proves to be difficult to measure – is accused of 'failing'.

Staying healthy, staying safe and enjoying life

The RCN School Nurses Forum Conference, held 1 March 2008 at RCN headquarters in London, was a huge success, with tickets completely sold out. Forum member ELSA CHADDAWAY reports.

First up ...

Dr David Regis from the Schools Health Education Unit gave an overview of young people's behaviour today and – contrary to popular belief – it is not all doom and gloom.

Following this, RCN Mental Health Nursing Forums member and Clinical Research Fellow Mark Haddad described the Quest study, which aims to provide school nurses with resources and audit tools to use with young people who

potentially have a mental health issue. Mark will be contacting a random selection of school nurses in the future to ask them to contribute to the research by completing a postal survey.

Workshops

The four workshops dealt with enuresis, finding solutions to problems, supporting children with medical needs and Internet safety for children and young people.

For further information on enuresis,

it is worth going on the ERIC website (www.eric.org.uk) for resources such as *Childhood nocturnal enuresis and daytime wetting: a handbook for professionals*.

The second workshop featured John Wheeler, who inspired us to go out and look for the good things that are happening in a family, to help them find solutions to problems.

The Internet safety workshop was a revelation: how many of you know enough about the risks young people face when using chat rooms and social networking sites? Michael Smith gave a very thought-provoking presentation on this, discussing how young people must be taught how to

Drug education can't inoculate young people from drug misuse. But it can support each young person's belief in themselves and their worth, and ensure they know how to take care of themselves, or ask for help if they need it. It can help young people develop and practise the skills they need in order to cope with a range of situations in a world where there are drugs. It can ensure they build a sound, reliable understanding of where hazards lie, and help prepare them to be fully accountable for their actions.

What we can and should be expecting drug education to do is add to the mix of things that help reduce the risks that lead to problematic drug use, and help promote the protective factors. It can also create a climate in which it is possible to identify those at greatest risk, and provide them with targeted support. What it must also do is empower children and young people in the decisions they make and in a way that helps them to enjoy their learning.

For further information, please visit:
www.drugeducationforum.com

Further reading

- Information Centre (2007) *Smoking, drinking and drug use amongst young people in England in 2006*.

recognise Internet grooming and what to do about it.

Afternoon sessions

Following the workshops, Dr Sarah Jarvis's session on cervical cancer and HPV vaccination was a very articulate account of how important it is to vaccinate girls when they are young, before they become sexually active.

To finish the day, Deborah Jamieson, Head of the Social Inclusion Programme at the Department of Health, gave an overview of the Government's action on domestic violence and the impact on children (*see her article, page six*).

An enjoyable day was had by all and we went home buzzing and keen to share our day with colleagues back at our workplaces. Hope to see you at the next forum conference on 28 August 2008 and again next year in February/March 2009.

HPV vaccination update

As you may be aware, the Department of Health (DH) has announced the introduction of a human papillomavirus (HPV) routine immunisation programme in England starting in September 2008, for girls aged 12 to 13 years (year 8).

What is HPV?

HPV infection is a common infection in young women, and causes over 90 per cent of invasive cervical cancer cases, resulting in around 3,000 cases and over 1,000 deaths in the UK every year. The new HPV vaccines have a good safety profile and protect against the two HPV virus types responsible for about 70 per cent of cases of cervical cancer. Three doses of the vaccine given over about a six-month period are needed for protection. However, because the vaccines only protect against two of the cancer-causing virus types, it is vital that young women continue to go for cervical screening when invited.

Catching up

In addition to the routine immunisation of girls aged 12 to 13 years, there will also be catch-up campaigns, starting in autumn 2009 and running for two years. In 2009/10, girls aged 16 to 18 years (years 12 and 13) will be offered the vaccination, and in 2010/11, girls aged 15 to 17 years (years 11 and 12) will be offered the vaccination.

Local health organisations (primary care trusts (PCTs) in England and local health boards in Wales) are responsible for planning how the NHS will deliver the vaccination programme in their area. The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised that HPV vaccination would be most efficiently delivered through schools. Local planning is under way across the country to ensure the vaccination programme will be delivered effectively and protect girls and young women against cervical cancer. The DH is also working closely with the Department for Children, Schools and Families, which has asked schools to respond sympathetically to requests from PCTs to use their premises for the vaccination sessions. This is subject, of course, to local circumstances.

Finding further information

Information packs on beating cervical cancer will be distributed to school nurses, other health professionals and educational establishments in May 2008. The packs will contain a leaflet, Q&A sheet, factsheet, Green Book chapter, consent form and personal record card. The pack will also be available at www.immunisation.nhs.uk, where a wide range of other information is already displayed, including training slides for health professionals and the presentations given at the HPV conferences held in October 2007 and March 2008.

Want to win a free place to the 2009 forum conference? ... simply write a short article for this newsletter!

The article, up to 500 words, has to show how you or your team have improved school nursing practice, and produced better outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Some suggestions for subject matter could be:

- new ways of working; ■ research; ■ a public health initiative; ■ school nurse competencies; ■ e-health; ■ record keeping; ■ new initiatives around obesity.

All articles entered will also be published on the RCN website.

Rules

- you must be an RCN School Nurses Forum member
- the article must be submitted by 1 September 2008 to the newsletter editor, Barbara Richardson-Todd, preferably by email, at: barbara.rt@virgin.net, or by post, at: Whitton Clinic, Meredith Road, Ipswich, IP1 6ED.
- include your RCN membership number, name, address, work title, place of work, and email address.

The winner, chosen by forum committee members, will be awarded a free place at the next RCN School Nurses Forum Conference in 2009. All other expenses for the conference, such as travel, are the responsibility of the winner.

Health and well-being for all the family

NANA QAWSON, School Health Adviser, Tower Hamlets Primary Care Trust, writes about the Mary Seacole Development Award 2007.

This pilot project examines the impact that health care professionals and related disciplines can have when working together for families, to provide information, advice and support for minor illnesses, minor injuries and ailments, physical activity and healthy eating.

Three key elements

1. health promotion and well-being
2. health education
3. improvement on access, care and treatment of primary care services and professionals and the appropriate use of secondary care services.

Professionals from disciplines across the health and local borough sectors will deliver the sessions, which will be held within the eight local area partnerships (LAPS) that represent the borough, so access is given to all. The borough's adult population will also have access to screening after topical sessions are held and any abnormalities can be followed up accordingly.

The goal

The aim is to support families, parents and young people to make informed decisions about their health and well-being, at the right time, with the right services within health (including nutrition and physical activity). Hopefully, this will provide improved self-care, awareness and empowerment to improve or change their current lifestyle practices, not just for themselves but for the whole family.

Key forecasted outcomes of this project would be:

- that professionals delivering the sessions are able to measure and contribute to the health-related targets of improving appropriate access, services and self-treatment around minor ailments, injury and illness
- to impact on the reduction of obesity and long-term conditions, which is often reflective of poor diets and sedentary lifestyles, or little physical activity.

On the MEND ...

Developed at the Institute of Child Health, University College London, and the Great Ormond Street Hospital NHS Trust, the MEND programme is the world's largest family-based childhood obesity treatment and prevention programme. Suitable for 7–13-year-old children accompanied by a parent or carer, the programme is a multi-component intervention that is evidence based and in line with NICE guidance for managing simple obesity in children. It combines practical learning about healthy eating with behaviour modification techniques and fun games that stimulate active enjoyment of physical activity.

Who is eligible?

The programme is offered free of charge at the point of access. It is structured into twice-weekly two-hour sessions held over 10 weeks, normally after school during term-time, in schools, leisure centres and other community locations.

The programme is currently being offered in 189 locations across the UK, rising to 261 in

May and 300 by the end of the year. MEND comprehensively trains and equips local teams in programme delivery and provides ongoing support, including a robust monitoring and evaluation system.

The MEND programme already forms a key part of local obesity care pathways and participants can either sign up voluntarily or by health professional referral. School nurses have a key role in actively signposting households to the MEND programmes operating in their communities and in encouraging families to take action and sign up. MEND data show that over half of the children who enrol on MEND programmes received details of the course in a school setting and through school nurses.

Working closely

MEND is extremely keen to work more closely with the school nursing community to maximise take-up of the places on the MEND programme and explore new partnership opportunities with local commissioning organisations.

For further information, visit www.mendprogramme.org, email enquiries@mendprogramme.org or telephone MEND on: 020 7231 7225.

Domestic abuse and children

DEBORAH JAMIESON, Head of the Social Inclusion Programme at the Department of Health, reports.

School nurses can play an important role in addressing children who are affected by domestic abuse. Training, identification, assessment of risk and safety planning are important (refer to local safeguarding policies and guidelines). The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) includes domestic violence as one of the risk factors. The Department of Health's Children and Domestic Violence toolkit will be published this spring and will provide up-to-date information for front-line professionals.

The three central aims of any intervention for children living with domestic violence are:

- to protect the children from harm caused to them by witnessing domestic violence and from other effects on them or on their non-abusive parent
- to empower the survivor (the non-abusing parent) so that they are better able to protect themselves and their children
- to hold the abusive adult to account for

their violence and provide them with opportunities to change their behaviour to become safer.

Helpful websites

- www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk – *Think family: improving the life chances of families at risk*, report by the Cabinet Office
- www.dh.gov.uk/mentalhealth – *Into the mainstream*
- www.crimereduction.co.uk – crime reduction mini-site on domestic violence.



RCN WING – Providing advice, support and information to RCN members affected by ill health, injury or disability – whether work related or not.

Contact 0845 408 4392/020 7647 3465 (weekdays 10am–12 noon) or email wing@rcn.org.uk

Independent School Nurses news

Letter from the Editor: Sarah Day

Worthwhile resources

Funding for independent schools to attend anaphylaxis campaign training days has now finished, but it is worth contacting your local health provider or school health team to see if they are offering training in the area, as the pack is a valuable resource.

Asthma UK's *Medical conditions in schools* policy pack, as well as its training resource, launched last year, are now available

online at: www.medicalconditionsatschool.org.uk

Successful meetings

The Medical Officers of Schools combined meeting held at Marlborough College in January 2008 was clinically stimulating and thought provoking. It was great to see an increasing number of school doctors with their nurses attending.

The RCN School Nurses Forum Conference, held in March at RCN headquarters in London, was well attended by independent school nurses and we look forward to seeing you again on 28 August 2008.

RCN Independent School Nurses meeting

Held at King Edward VI School, Wednesday, 5 March 2008. SARAH DAY reports.

Seventeen nurses from 10 schools met for our termly meeting. The programme was varied, with both Helen Ellerby – King Edward's Senior Nurse – and other outside speakers giving us an array of subject matter to consider.

Sexual health

Sex was the topic covered by sexual health nurses Jo Lowry and Helen Ellerby – we heard (and some learnt!) of the terms that teenagers use to describe sexual practices, and how we as nurses can help them to make informed choices about safer sex, and prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Various methods of contraception were shown, and this prompted discussion about confidentiality, how we manage the school environment and our code of conduct.

Following coffee, Jo Lowry talked about the HPV immunisation programme that comes into action this autumn. Many of us need to contact our primary care trusts (PCTs) to ensure that our independent schools are not 'forgotten' in this national programme that is being rolled out in schools. A short quiz checked that we had been listening carefully!

Rob Boswell from Physique Management Company then demonstrated some of his company's cold gel and blister products, used mainly for sports injuries.

Afternoon sessions

A lunch taken around the table enabled us to catch up with news and discuss the day so far, before Jo Summerton, a diabetes nurse specialist, spoke for an hour about the child and teenage diabetic. We were able to ask questions relating to practice in our individual schools, reassuring most of us that our protocols were up to date.

Before we all went our separate ways, we had a general update. Some nurses spoke of not being included in staff meetings, and of having had children return with crutches/tracheotomies and not been told, while others spoke of feeling fully integrated in school life. It was a good use of time, and left many with food for thought and a 'to do' list.

Many thanks to those who organised the meeting. The next one in the summer term will be at Sherfield School, with Winchester College offering for autumn 2008 and Westbourne House for spring 2009.

An inspiration to all

Eileen Melody, who died in November 2007, was an inspirational Nursing Sister at Manchester Grammar School (MGS) from 1988 to 2004. Those at the school remember her:

Eileen was the consummate professional and established sound working practices and new facilities at MGS for dealing with all the medical needs of pupils and staff. Her background in A&E departments and her experience in counselling combined to make her a sympathetic point of reference for all, but never a 'soft touch'. Eileen was also outward looking, and worked hard to promote the status of nursing services in independent schools.

Generations of MGS staff, pupils and parents owe her an immense debt. Many of them attended her funeral at English Martyrs' Church in Urmston, and a choir from school sang in the service. Our sympathy is with her husband Vincent, her sons, Paul and David, and her extended family.

If anyone who knew Eileen would like to extend their sympathies, please contact the school at: developmentoffice@mgs.org, or oldboys@mgs.org

Family Nurse Partnerships programme

This programme is an evidence-based early intervention that, in the USA, has significantly improved the outcomes of disadvantaged children and families. DEBORAH JAMIESON, Head of the Social Inclusion Programme at the Department of Health, reports on its use in England.

The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) programme aims to strengthen universal child health services whilst providing an intensive programme to the most high-risk families to help reduce inequalities.

The FNP is welcomed by hard-to-reach families (80–90 per cent take up the offer) and has the enthusiastic support of the nurses who are seeing changes take place in health behaviour, relationships, parental role and maternal well-being.

By testing the Family Nurse Partnership, we are:

- starting in early pregnancy
- using a programme with good evidence from 30 years' research in the USA that suggests that it works
- using an approach that recognises and builds on the hopes and aspirations that everyone has for their children during pregnancy.

When nurses deliver the programme, the outcomes are 50 per cent higher than when delivered by para-professionals. I believe this is due to the skills and acceptability of nurses. It is the skills and competencies of the family nurses that are important to delivery, and this can be drawn from health visitors, children's nurses or school nurses, as well as midwives who have a background in community nursing.

For any further queries, please contact me on email: deborah.jamieson@dh.gsi.gov.uk

Did you know you can read this newsletter online?

This and other forum newsletters are available on the RCN website even before they are mailed out to members.

So if you would like to be one of the first to read the next issue log on to **MyRCN** at www.rcn.org.uk/myrcn, or call RCN Direct on **0845 772 6100**, to register your email address and opt in to our email services. You'll then be sent an email with a link through to the newsletter each time it is published rather than be sent a printed copy.

Help us reduce our carbon footprint and save some trees!

NEWS

Medical conditions at school

A copy of *Medical conditions at school: a policy resource pack and the Medical conditions awareness sessions: a school health care professionals resource* can be found at www.medicalconditionsatschool.org.uk, or contact Asthma UK's Supporter and Information Team on telephone: **0845 603 8143** or email: info@asthma.org.uk

Obese children – a stark wake-up call

Nearly one in four children in England aged four to five and almost a third of 10 to 11-year-olds are obese or overweight. See the results of the National Child Measurement Programme, at: www.ic.nhs.uk/our-services/improving-patient-care/national-child-measurement-programme. Also, find *Guidance on setting goals for local prevalence of child obesity*, at: www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_083110

Sex and relationships

A review of *sex and relationship education delivery* is available at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2008_0029

Abortion education

A 16-page best practice toolkit for abortion education is available to download from Education for Choice on: www.efc.org.uk/Forprofessionals/Bestpracticeingroupworkandeducationsettings

New NICE guidelines

Promoting children's social and emotional wellbeing in primary education is available on:

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=byID&o=11948

Staying safe action plan

For further information, visit:

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/stayingsafe. Also, check out a stay safe website for young people at: www.missdorothy.com

Scotland's food future

The Scottish Government's consultation, *Choosing the right ingredients: the future for food in Scotland*, outlines what their government has done in relation to food since May 2007 and what they plan to do to develop a future food and drink industry. It is available at: <http://childpolicyinfo.childrenscotland.org.uk/index/news-app?story=5981&archived=N>

Counselling in schools

This research study into the services for children and young people looks at different models of counselling provision offered in schools across the UK. Visit: www.childreninwales.org.uk/policy/documents/researchandreports/8817.html

RCN R&D

Anyone interested in the RCN's latest research and development news, check out: www.rcn.org.uk/development/researchanddevelopment



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