

Working in Health in Argyll and Bute

Report by Pat Tyrrell, Lead Nurse, Argyll and Bute CHP

The CPP Management Team is asked to:

- **Note the work undertaken by Working in Health Project Team in Argyll and Bute**
- **Consider whether further joint work within CPP partners can bring added value to the scheme**

1. Background and Summary

Working in Health in Argyll and Bute (WHAB) began as part of a 2-year research programme taking place in over 70 schools in Scotland. It was part of the **WHAP** programme – Working in Health Access Programme, designed to raise awareness/application among school students for all careers in health. Initially the programme was targeted at S3 pupils who were likely to achieve 5 credit passes in their Standard grade subjects. An additional aim was to encourage pupils to consider University, where this had not been a traditional route in their family background.

Pupils at all 10 secondary schools in A&B were assessed to determine their suitability to participate by a process of questionnaires for themselves and their parents, and some psychometric testing was carried out as part of the research project. 120 S3 pupils were identified for the academic year 2004/2005 and they visited the Dept of Medicine at Glasgow University for a full day of healthcare related activities. Approximately 100 pupils attended this visit in the year 2005/2006, traditionally in November. Changes to funding meant that in the year 2006/2007 this visit would take place later.

The next strand in the programme was that by the end of March 2005 Meet the Professionals Events (MTP) had taken place for this initial group of students who had visited Glasgow, and others not able to visit Glasgow, but equally interested. These events based in the local hospital near to the school allowed the students to talk to a variety of professionals and participate in some hands on tasks

2. Main part of paper

Funding for the original WHAP project ceased after its 2 years. In June 2005 a working group was set up in Argyll and Bute to explore the possibility of continuing with certain elements of the project. The group was chaired by the LHCC General Manager and membership included representatives from Careers Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council, Local Schools, Practice Development Nurses, Lead Nurse, GP, Argyll and Islands Enterprise, WHAB Project Officer (short term funded by Education).

The key elements which the group identified to take forward were:

- Visits to university
- Meet The Professional events
- Work experience placements
- Identification of professional mentors for students who chose specific professions

Meet The Professional events have continued to take place, organised locally by the Practice Development Nurses - this did not take place last year in Helensburgh as there was no identified support for the project. Work experience placements have also continued in most areas, with a draft work experience policy developed under old NHS Argyll and Clyde being used to give some structure to the placements.

Further work is needed to review the work experience placements, with concerns regarding issues of confidentiality being raised in some surgeries. Also ensuring variety within the placements so that students gain the most benefit, would support the ideals of the project.

It was also identified that although each current S3 year benefited from the Meet the Professionals event and visits to Glasgow, and work experience happened in either S3 or S4 depending upon the school, it would be difficult to keep track of the youngsters who had gone through the programme and were now making higher and university choices. A scheme of mentoring has been suggested and a short ½ day mentoring support training package was devised in conjunction with Careers Scotland. These mentors would then keep in contact with youngsters who had identified their profession as a future career choice.

Argyll and Bute Council have also developed a Grow Our Own (GOO) scheme which encompasses many of the elements of WHAB. Links between both groups have been developed with the lead for each organisation being on both groups. Combining the two schemes will cut down on duplication and optimise the efforts of both organisations in addressing future workforce planning. This is now being taken forward.

Joint LA/NHS road shows are being planned to take place in Feb/March 2007 at all 10 secondary schools in Argyll and Bute, with local champions in each area helping to organise these from a LA and NHS perspective.

It is not yet clear how effective this approach will be in increasing the number of local students choosing careers in health. Work with Careers Scotland should enable us to begin to track the career paths of those who have expressed interests while at secondary school.

There is evidence from other countries that healthcare workers will return to their local communities given the right support and opportunities.

There is still a lot of work that needs to happen to embed WHAB/GOO in the NHS. After discussing this project with LA it is evident that they have made great strides in raising awareness of this initiative within all layers of their organisation. It is well supported by Council's Chief Executive and Director of Community Services.

The CHP has supported this through:

- Promoting awareness of, and support for the project at all levels within the CHP
- Additional support within each locality for organisation of roadshows and Meet the Professional events
- Identified professional champions within each locality
- IT support to develop web links
- Identified HR adviser to support the work
- £3000 to support roadshows and development of career promotion materials

The CPP partners are asked to consider whether any further joint actions can be taken to promote this work.

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