

National Men's Health Week 2003



Tennis star Pat Cash and TV 'Jungle Queen' Linda Barker helped launch National Men's Health Week

National Men's Health Week (NMHW) 2003 drew to a close on 15 June. From an organisational point of view, things went very well. We will find out more when we begin to receive evaluation forms back. Certainly the three tangible outcomes of all our work – the NMHW CD-ROM; the men's Toolbox information pack, which was distributed through the Ladbrokes chain of bookmakers; and the policy report, Private Parts, Public Policy – arrived on schedule, were of a high standard, and were well received. Partnerships were also developed with a number of national voluntary organisations which not only supported the Week but will also lead to longer-term collaboration.

Almost 1500 people and organisations registered their interest in NMHW – a number which far exceeded our initial expectations. Although not all of these will have organised a local activity, it is certain that many did, and we can therefore be absolutely confident that many hundreds of events took place around the country.

One of the objectives of NMHW is to raise public awareness and an important way of achieving this is to generate media coverage. Our photo-call (as they call it in the trade) launch of the Week featured tennis hero, Pat Cash, and Linda Barker who had recently appeared in I'm a Celebrity, Get Me Out of Here. Three of the tabloids carried the picture (four, if you count the Daily Record in Scotland). We also secured a very

healthy level of TV and radio coverage at both national and regional level. There was rather less interest among the broadsheets in Private Parts, Public Policy, despite a launch at the House of Commons at which the keynote speakers were Professor Michael Adler and Claire Rayner of the Patients' Association. (See page 3 for more about this event). We did attract interest in the specialist and medical press but, of the nationals, only the Independent on Sunday mentioned the document. Policy papers do have a fairly long shelf life, however, and we will be using Private Parts as a basis for our campaigning and policy work for some time to come.



The male surgery team at the University Hospital of Hartlepool ran successful NMHW events.

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MHF Members' Meeting



MHF President, Dr Ian Banks met with members at January's free MHF Members' Meeting

The second MHF Members' Meeting will take place in the afternoon of 30 October in London. As with the successful event held in January this will be free to members.

Members of the Forum will be sent more information about this shortly. Please put the date in your diary now!

Better Health for Travelling Men

Men's Health Forum trustee Richard O'Neill has written a booklet called *On the Road to Better Health for Travelling Men*.

There has been increasing interest in the health of travellers. In the House of Lords recently, Lord Avebury told Peers that "Gypsy Travelling people are the most socially deprived of all the minorities in England, but their needs receive comparatively little attention, their accommodation, educational attainment, health and job opportunities are all inferior to those of the rest of the population."

That's why this booklet is such an important resource to both Gypsy and Travelling men and those who care for them.

Richard O'Neill said "I know only too well the stresses and strains the travelling life has upon the health of men and compounded by the fact that access to healthcare is often very difficult. But as a great believer in self-help, I hope the booklet will encourage Gypsy and Travelling men to think about their health and maybe take the first steps to doing something to improve it. Having MHF and the National Association of Health Workers with Travellers (NAHWT) publish this booklet has enabled us to have a resource that we simply haven't had before – an up to date health booklet written by a Gypsy man for other Gypsy men."

Forum members have been sent this booklet, which is otherwise available from NAHWT; contact them on 0121 446 2300.

International Men's Health Database



The European Men's Health Forum (EMHF), has launched the International Men's Health Database (IMHD).

This is a database of individuals and organisations from around the world with an interest or direct involvement in men's health. Initially intended to foster collaboration and to support the development of a community of interest around Europe, this project is now supported by other men's health organisations from around the world, such as the International Society for Men's Health, The Australian Men's Health Information Resource Centre, and The US Men's Health Network.

The project welcomes individuals but also organisations such as men's health groups, national health charities, research centres, government bodies and health promotion agencies.

This database is intended to encourage contacts and exchange of information on research, policy and practice. Each registered user is provided with the opportunity to share information about their specific area of expertise, topics of interest, research and projects in a wide range of activities. A sophisticated search facility also enables them to browse through the details of other users for the most relevant type of information. The database is at:

www.emhfdatabase.org.

Our Men's Health training programme goes from strength to strength!

'Very educational and lots of information – but what was particularly useful were the ideas for putting the information into practice.'

'Excellent delivery – interactive – discussion based. Felt the course has helped (me) to "get inside" men's heads!'

'I feel I'm not on my own in wanting to work with men and have gained ideas on how to go about this.'

Just some of the comments from those who have participated in one of the Forum's training courses.

Special rates are available for Forum members.

Robbie Porter, our Training Officer, has now provided training across the length and breadth of the country, including Manchester, Preston, Bamsley, Maidenhead, Lowestoft and Birmingham.

The training is experiential, drawing on participants' own experiences, and we use case-study scenarios, quizzes and small group work to make the day as interactive as possible. We can also present at conferences, study days and symposia.

Robbie is keen to discuss training needs directly with members. We can offer our core training programme locally or develop new courses around your specific needs.

Training provided so far includes:

- Introduction to Men's Health
- Mental Health and Suicide
- Men and Sexual Health
- Planning Services for Men
- Working with Fathers
- Working with Young Men.

A copy of our bespoke training leaflet can be obtained from the Men's Health Forum office, and you can contact Robbie on 01905 21340 or e-mail him at robbie.porter@menshealthforum.org.uk

All Party Parliamentary Group on Men's Health



Dr Howard Stoute MP, chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Men's Health, and Claire Rayner spoke at the Group's meeting in June.



Professor Michael Adler highlighted the spread of STIs and the inadequacy of sex education.

The week before National Men's Health Week, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Men's Health held a reception in Parliament on sexual health. The event, with high profile guest speakers, was designed to complement National Men's Health Week and brief politicians on male sexual health issues.

President of the Men's Health Forum, Dr Ian Banks, launched Private Parts, Public Policy. He called on the Department of Health to take up the recommendations in the Forum's report. Members have already been sent a copy of the report but it can be downloaded from www.menshealthforum.org.uk.

Professor Michael Adler, of the Department of Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Royal Free and University College Medical School, told the Group and guests: "Men's sexual health is now a matter of great concern. Rates of sexually transmitted infections are increasing significantly and GUM clinics are unable to cope with the rising demand for their services. Sex education for boys remains inadequate and, among older men, prostate disease and sexual dysfunction present more of a problem. There is an urgent need for sexual health policies to recognise men's

specific needs and for the development of the kind of accessible, innovative services that men are more likely to use. These changes must be underpinned by much greater levels of investment by Government; the alternative is a public health crisis in relation to sexual health."

Claire Rayner, President of the Patients' Association, also spoke at the event. She backed the MHF report, and said "This report shows that despite excellent efforts from organisations, such as the Men's Health Forum, to improve communication to men about their health, and particularly their sexual health, there is not nearly enough commitment from Government to provide better access to services for men of all ages".

Since the launch of Private Parts, Public Policy many of the same recommendations have been included in the House of Commons Health Committee's own report into sexual health. The Committee said they were "appalled by the crisis in sexual health". You can read their report, launched during National Men's Health Week, at

www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/health_committee.cfm.

Update on Update

Update is about to be updated! In the autumn, Update will be replaced by a new, longer bulletin that will much more fully reflect the Forum's priorities and interests. It will not only keep the Forum's members in touch with developments but also be an important means of influencing key opinion-formers both locally and nationally.

The quarterly bulletin will focus on policy, service development, research (non-clinical), parliamentary news and other men's health issues. It will complement the existing Men's Health Journal (which has a mainly clinical focus) and the Forum's website for health professionals (www.menshealthforum.org.uk). The bulletin will be free to Forum members.

An editor will be appointed during the summer and an editorial advisory board established. Contributions to the bulletin from Forum members and others will be very welcome – any ideas should be sent to the editor via office@menshealthforum.org.uk.

It has also been agreed that the Men's Health Journal is no longer the

'official journal' of the Men's Health Forum. This decision, taken jointly by the Journal and the Forum, is intended to help the Journal secure a wider level of involvement from other organisations with an interest in men's health. The Forum will continue to support and work with the Journal – it remains a very valuable and important publication.

In fact, the Journal now has its own website, www.menshealthjournal.co.uk. Here you will find details of articles published to date as well as short abstracts of each article. Forum members are still entitled to a discount on subscriptions to the Journal – for details, please email colin.penning@menshealthforum.org.uk.

Finally, the new bulletin needs a name! If anyone has any good ideas, please send them to office@menshealthforum.org.uk by the end of August. If we choose your suggested name, we will send you author-signed copies of two recent men's health books – Real Health for Men by Forum Director Peter Baker and The Haynes Man Manual by Forum President Dr Ian Banks.

Who's who at the Forum



Jane DeVille-Almond, Vice Chair and Vice President

Jane DeVille-Almond, the vice chair of the Forum's Board of Trustees, and also vice president of the Forum, is an independent nurse consultant specialising in men's health and obesity. Jane has been passionate about men's health issues and has developed many innovative new ways of making health care more accessible to men.

Jane has worked in nursing for 29 years. She trained as a general nurse, midwife, and health visitor and also has a degree in English and German business studies. She has worked as a practice nurse and public health nurse and admits that at no time during her early career had she thought about gender-specific health care.

She ran her first alternative men's health surgery in the Moxley Arms Pub in the West Midlands with some of her nursing colleagues and has developed services in many other male friendly venues since. These have included running male MOT services in a Harley-Davidson showroom, having a regular surgery in the back of a barber's shop in Wolverhampton,

setting up clinics at fishing fairs and most recently working with Telford and Wrekin PCT running surgeries on industrial estates.

Jane speaks about her work to a range of professionals across the country and has won several awards for her innovation. Most recently she has worked closely with the Department of Health on a study looking at the possibility of running smoking cessation clinics in working men's clubs throughout England. She has also been involved with the Queen's Nursing Institute's awards advising on the new male health awards section.

Having worked as primary care editor at the Nursing Times, Jane realised the importance of passing on information to her colleagues so regularly writes for health care magazines on boys and men's health issues.

Jane's own father had his first heart attack at the age of 42 and died early from prostate cancer. She is a firm believer that had she as a nurse, or her father, understood a little more about male health then his life could have been extended.

Her main focus in the future is to continue to educate health care professionals to understand gender-specific issues and for all primary care trusts to focus on providing appropriate and accessible health care for boys and men.



Jane DeVille-Almond runs a men's health clinic in barber's shop

MHF Members' Meeting
30 October,
all afternoon in central London
Free to members
More information
coming soon!

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