

**NATIONAL HEALTHY UNIVERSITIES NETWORK  
TEESSIDE UNIVERSITY, DARLINGTON CAMPUS  
THURSDAY 16 MAY 2013**



**REPORT OF MEETING  
&  
REPORT OF THEMED SESSION/  
WORKSHOP ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

The English National Network of Healthy Universities is led by the University of Central Lancashire and Manchester Metropolitan University, supported by a Project Board comprising partners from Leeds Trinity University College, Nottingham Trent University, Teesside University and the University of the West of England.

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# WELCOME, INTRODUCTION AND NETWORK UPDATE

## WELCOME

- Hazel Wright welcomed Network members to Teesside University and introductions were made.
- Mark Dooris echoed Hazel's welcome and recapped on the Network's history for those who had not been to previous meetings. He then provided an update on matters arising following on from the last meeting and on Network business and developments.

## INTRODUCTION AND NETWORK UPDATE

### Website

- The HEFCE-funded project enabled the Network to be strengthened and for the [Healthy Universities Website](#) and the [Healthy Universities Toolkit](#) to be developed.
- Mark apologised that the website has not been as 'dynamic' as previously and explained that this was due to an absence of administrative support over the past few months.
- He thanked those who have submitted case studies and encouraged others to submit new cases too, using the [case study template](#) form available on the website.
- Using Google Analytics, Mark provided a summary of website traffic. These were really encouraging. Since it was set up in 2010, 7,540 unique visitors from 117 different countries have made 13,399 visits to the website. The statistics indicates that interest and engagement has increased over time – with 1,446 people visiting the site in the period January-April 2013 compared to 1,088 in the period January-April 2011.

### Toolkit – Self Review Tool

- Mark introduced the Self Review Tool and encouraged members to take a look at it and utilise it. He reported that the Project Board is exploring the feasibility of conducting research to understand how different institutions have used it and its impacts.
- There was also a discussion about the potential to establish an anonymised data set drawing on the results from consenting universities. It was agreed that, whilst the tool had been created for internal use rather than as a benchmarking tool, there would be value in it being developed to provide metrics that could help to demonstrate the efficacy of the Healthy University approach and encourage the engagement and buy-in of vice-chancellors. However, it was also acknowledged that this could only happen through a funded development project and a partnership with a national organisation (e.g. RSPH).

### Gambling and Gaming

Mark reported that he has asked Susannah Atwell for an update about BUCS' decision regarding acceptance of funding from gaming/gambling organisations – which the Healthy Universities Project Board and Network agreed was inappropriate within the context of an overarching commitment to promoting health and wellbeing. N.B. subsequent to the meeting, the following information was received from BUCS: *"The interest from the Gambling & Gaming partner was withdrawn but having consulted with our members it was also apparent that there were conflicting views as to the suitability of such a partnership. We would therefore not automatically dismiss an approach from a similar company but would again consult with our members before any decisions were made."*

### Student Health Behaviour

- Mark mentioned that he has been contacted by a PhD student (and also a staff member at the University of East London) interested in accessing research data and/or undertaking new research on student health-related behaviours. Details will be circulated.

## Wales

- Mark reported that Sue Bowker at the Welsh Government is leading the development of a Healthy and Sustainable FE and HE Programme for Wales. This will include an accreditation framework that draws strongly on the Network's Self Review Tool.
- Wales would prefer not to set up a separate network – and following discussions with Sue and with Gil Barton from Scotland, the Project Board have agreed to 'rebrand' as the National Network, extending the scope beyond England – and including Welsh and Scottish representation on the Board. As previously, the Network will remain open to individuals and institutions from other countries (e.g. Ireland, Canada)

## Scotland

- Gil Barton provided an update on developments in Scotland. She is still liaising closely with Linda Orr at Dundee University and with colleagues at NHS Health Scotland regarding the development of Healthy Universities in Scotland. she has been asked to report back from today's meeting and is hopeful that the decision to expand the scope of the Network to the UK will help to catalyse further developments.

## Ireland

- Deirdre Griffin reported that she is not aware of any national-level activity in Ireland. A number of universities are involved in the delivery of health promotion activity, but - to her knowledge - only University College Cork have launched a strategic whole system healthy/health promoting university initiative.

## NETWORKING: UPDATES, SHARING OF PRACTICE AND PEER SUPPORT

### Robert Gordon University (RGU)

- Gil Barton reported on the launch of '[Fit for the Future](#)', the [Robert Gordon University Healthy University initiative](#), which has been branded with a whole system focus on the health of students, staff and wider community.
- She reported that there has been a five year process to get to this point. This process was facilitated by an intern from Chicago focusing on student health, which resulted in the formal engagement of the Dean and the production of reports, which in turn led to formal approval with the initiative being incorporated within the University's strategic implementation plan and a Committee being established with broad representation.
- The launch built on wide-ranging work including student-led curricular, volunteering and other work, a staff health questionnaire comprising validated tools such as WEMWBS alongside wider questions (which secured a 35% response rate).
- General discussion about different approaches. Durham - students very keen and ambitious (possibly because most do not work). 2nd year students tend to be best target group.

### University College Cork (UCC)

- UCC Health Matters has been established, expressing a strategic commitment to the whole system 'health promoting universities' approach (see [Action Plan](#)).
- There has been wide and intensive use of social media – 'operation transformation'. This has been time-consuming but really valuable in strengthening the brand. Facebook ([UCC Health Matters](#)) has been used well by students; Twitter has been used more by staff, along with one staff member having set up a successful blog. There is also an online 'e-zine' and a strong focus on student engagement and involvement.

## Smoking and Tobacco Control

- Gil Barton highlighted the challenge of implementing smoke-free areas/campus. RGU is to trial a recorded voice to deter people from smoking in controlled areas.
- Karen Cregan outlined Chester University's approach, using smoking cessation clinics and trialling a herbal replacement (alongside a placebo). They have explored the feasibility of a non-smoking campus, but this was not supported by the governors, who identified issues relating to enforceability.
- Hazel Wright mentioned that Teesside University is focusing on 'smoke-free areas' and is involved in a wider smoke-free alliance.
- Sharon Doherty highlighted that UCLan and some other universities have banned e-cigarettes – and that she is currently awaiting a response from the students' union. The need for clear guidance was highlighted. It was thought that the [Higher Education Occupational Physicians/Practitioners](#) grouping has produced guidance.
- The issue of Shisha was also discussed: Bernadette McGrath mentioned that Liverpool John Moores University has strong links to the local authority with regard to this issue.

## Student Experience, Volunteering, Employability and Related Issues

- Ann-Marie Myers from Sheffield Hallam University outlined their [Student Exercise and Wellness Project](#), set up to enhance student experience by providing a healthy lifestyle intervention and the opportunity to boost employability. Third year exercise and health science students provided health checks and healthy lifestyle consultations for health care students. The project is now in its second phase and the results of this will be available summer 2013. Additionally, Sheffield Hallam University has a staff wellness service.
- Karen Cregan from Chester University outlined a similar initiative and the value added through embedding this in their Master's programme dissertation. It was agreed that dissertations could enable students to have real-life experience (linking to employability) and provide useful knowledge/research for Healthy Universities.
- Bernadette McGrath explained that Liverpool John Moores University is currently liaising with the city council on a 'time bank' scheme. This offers the potential to involve both students and staff – and is a good way of fostering university-community links. Key issues to be considered include safeguarding, insurance etc.
- Lynn Preston highlighted the strong volunteering culture at Durham University: students are very keen and ambitious and second year students tend to be best target group.

## Strategic Commitment and Unifying Structures

- Ann-Marie Myers from Sheffield Hallam University explained that their work has remained quite fragmented, but that she sees potential to bring together student and staff wellness.
- Gil Barton and Deirdre Griffin recapped on their earlier briefings, describing their strategic level commitment and associated structures for whole system working.
- Mark Dooris and Sharon Doherty reflected on UCLan's experience: with the Healthy University initiative now in place since 1995, there is strong strategic commitment expressed through clear governance (via a high-level steering group). Sharon explained that in the latest action plan, there is a strong commitment to ensuring that parallel initiatives (e.g. UCLan Sport; Sustainability; Travel) are linked and cross-referenced.

## NEXT MEETING

Mark reported that future meeting dates will be notified in due course. It is hoped that the Autumn 2013 meeting will take place in London and the Spring 2014 meeting in Cardiff or the Midlands.

## **THEMED SESSION ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

### **The Social Sport Approach at Teesside: Pip Bell (Sports Development Officer - Participation, Teesside University)**

Pip Bell provided a [presentation](#) on the social sport approach at Teesside, exploring the opportunities and challenges involved in her working with different sub-groups of students. She outlined the Teesside model of social sport (operated in collaboration with BUCS teams) and emphasised the importance of promoting this through approaches such as 'turn up and play' - and the potential for connecting with health and wellbeing. She also highlighted the success of having 'social sport activators' (supporting the employability agenda) supported by student volunteers. The cost of organising and supporting social sport over the past year has been around £8,500 (using external funding drawn in). Looking ahead, Teesside University aims to develop a new 'activator' model, to tailor the model based on feedback and to strengthen links to health and wellbeing. There is currently a fund-raising campaign to extend staff activity (which has until now been concentrated during the summer).

### **How ukactive are Engaging with the Higher Education Sector: (Fergus MacIntosh and Lucy Button, ukactive)**

Fergus MacIntosh and Lucy Button gave a [presentation](#) on the work of [ukactive](#) – a not-for-profit trade body that aims to promote and support physical activity. They also discussed how ukactive engages with and supports the higher education sector, which offers enormous opportunities to promote physical activity – with around 3 million students across 280 sites (N.B. about 50 universities are members of ukactive). It has developed 'One Big Thing' as a way of extending student participation in physical activity, which is being piloted on 17 May 2013. There was some discussion about the value of incorporating peer support/buddying systems and of linking to GP [exercise referral schemes](#).

### **Working in Partnership with the New Local Public Health Teams and Others to Improve Physical Activity Participation and Improve Health**

Hazel Wright, Jean Lordon, Lindsay Johnson and Liane Azevedo gave a [presentation](#) providing an overview of how Teesside University has developed its physical activity agenda through working in partnership with local public health teams, sports and physical activity alliances (SPAAs) and other groups/bodies – and facilitated an interactive workshop.

Hazel reflected on the Teesside journey, illustrating how it is possible to use entry points and take small steps to build towards a wide whole system model of working with high-level commitment. She also emphasised the value of working with external partners as a means of making contacts, drawing in expertise and ensuring that the university population is understood to be part of the local population. They are currently planning a health needs assessment (students and staff).

Lindsay outlined the recent changes in national policy and in public health responsibilities, with the shift of the local team from the NHS into the local authority and the establishment of new commissioning arrangements. She also gave insight into the Middlesbrough context, discussed the importance of tackling health inequalities (drawing on the Marmot Review), emphasised the role of Health and Wellbeing Boards and Strategies and highlighted the 'joint strategic needs [and assets] assessment' (JSNA) process. She went on to give an overview of physical activity as a key health determinant and the local partnership arrangements that have been developed to take work forward - including the opportunities for the University to be involved through research and evaluation.

Jean Lordon described the sports partnership arrangements, focusing on County Sports Partnerships. She highlighted the overriding focus on increasing participation in sport and active recreation - emphasising 'participation pathways' and stressing links to health and wellbeing.

Liane Azevedo outlined the work of the Fuse North East research collaboration, before drawing on the academic literature and a recent [health needs assessment of students](#) carried out in Newcastle, to outline key findings from research into the health needs and behaviours of students in higher education. She concluded that: there are a number of key risk areas; health awareness is high but use of health services is low; and university students are an under-researched group.

## Workshop Discussion

Network members split into groups to discuss the issues raised, using a reflective practice approach in relation to the following questions:

- In relation to working with the new Public Health infrastructure and wider partners (to aid the implementation of your well-being strategy/development of HU approach in your areas/institutions:
  - What has worked already/so far (strengths) – if anything – why has it worked?
  - What has not worked? (barriers) – why do you think it has not worked?
  - What do you think you can do to make it work?
  - Think of at least 1 action you will take away from today to help it work?

Key points emerging from the discussions included:

- There is often a gap between contacts and communication – it can be a struggle to create a meaningful dialogue.
- Whilst Teesside University has well-established partnerships with local public health and sports/activity alliances, many universities have found it challenging to forge such good working relationships – and challenging to ensure that the university community is viewed as an integral part of the local population. This may result from a perception that universities have elite and privileged populations.
- In challenging this, it can be helpful to capture and communicate statistics about the university community and its health needs and perspectives. It can also be useful to emphasise that investment in the Healthy Universities approach is about 'future shaping' as well as student/staff health in real-time.
- It is always important to locate and connect with the 'gate-keepers'.
- There is a wealth of good activity going on in universities with both students and staff. However, some institutions struggle to join this up or to secure strategic commitment and leadership.
- It can be valuable to highlight the links between social sport/low-level activity and mental wellbeing.

Hazel concluded by offering some 'Top Tips':

- Network, network, network.
- Be persistent and be prepared to 'play the long game'.
- Identify the 'gate keeper'.
- Don't re-invent the wheel – look at pilot programmes, interventions and service models that have had successful outcomes in other localities.
- Share good practice.
- Use your networks to find out what strategy/partnership groups exist that you could attend rather than duplicating efforts.

- Think about and discuss with partners how you could add value to their service or aid in meeting their objectives and you yours.
- Use the evidence base – there is a lot of easily accessible local information to understand your local population needs and assets e.g. local health and physical activity profiles, Sport England data, local JSNA and Health and Wellbeing strategy documents.
- Risk taking behaviours of students should be considered holistically and not in isolation.
- There is a need to facilitate students' access to health services.

## **APPENDIX 1: ATTENDANCE**

### **Present**

Taryn Archbold	Northumbria University
Liane Azevedo	Teesside University
Gil Barton	Robert Gordon University
Pip Bell	Teesside Sport
Lucy Button	ukactive
Karen Cregan	University Of Chester
Richard Cuthbert	Teesside University
Sharon Doherty	UCLan
Prof Mark Dooris	UCLan
Deirdre Griffin	University College Cork
Sarah Humphreys	Leeds Metropolitan University
Lindsay Johnson	Middlesbrough Council
Mark Jordan	Southampton Solent University
Dr Ian Kenyvn	Leeds Trinity University
Jean Lordon	Tees Valley Sport
Amanda McCarroll	University Of Chester
Bernadette McGrath	Liverpool John Moores University
Fergus McIntosh	ukactive
Jo Mannion	Leeds Metropolitan University
Anna-Marie Myers	Sheffield Hallam University
Lynn Preston	Durham University - Community Outreach
Anne Richardson	Teesside University
Amanda Rigbye	University of Salford
Claire Smith	University of East London
Judy Stevenson	Sheffield Hallam University
Nigel Thomas	Loughborough University
Emma Walters	Cardiff Metropolitan University
Hazel Wright	Teesside University

### **Apologies**

Andy Allford	King's College London
Susannah Attwell	British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS)
Dame Carol Black	
Rachel Brown	Cardiff University
Sarah Bustard	Nottingham Trent University
Kate Graham	University of Gloucestershire
Dr Dawne Gurbutt	Higher Education Academy
Joel Kesterton	Sheffield Hallam University
Andrea McCloughlin	Sunderland University
Prof Judy Orme	University of the West of England
Dr Sue Powell	Manchester Metropolitan University

## **APPENDIX 2: BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS**

### **Liane Azevedo [l.azevedo@tees.ac.uk](mailto:l.azevedo@tees.ac.uk)**

Liane works in the Health and Social Care Institute and Teesside University and is part of FUSE, the Centre for Translational Research in Public Health (a UKCRC Public Health Research Centre of Excellence involving Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Sunderland and Teesside universities).

### **Pip Bell [p.bell@tees.ac.uk](mailto:p.bell@tees.ac.uk)**

Pip has worked in the Sports Development industry for 14 years, starting in Local Authority Sports Development then moving to Higher Education Sport 5 years ago. Pip has extensive experience in developing participation sports projects, working with hard to reach groups and accessing funding opportunities. Pip also has a passion for developing women's rugby union with 25 years experience in the sport as a player and coach.

### **Lucy Button [LucyButton@ukactive.org.uk](mailto:LucyButton@ukactive.org.uk)**

Lucy works within the Public Affairs and Policy team at ukactive managing relationships with key stakeholders in the sector, and supporting them in scoping, delivering and evaluating specific programmes.

### **Lindsay Johnson [lindsay\\_johnson@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:lindsay_johnson@middlesbrough.gov.uk)**

Lindsay has worked in Public Health for 10 years as a specialist lead for obesity, diet and nutrition and more recently physical activity. As the specialist lead Lindsay is responsible for the planning, commissioning, development and evaluation of health improvement programmes linked to these areas. Lindsay holds a degree in nutrition and a masters in Public Health which she gained from the University of Teesside in 2006. She is interested in early intervention and prevention of ill health, specifically related to obesity and physical inactivity.

### **Jean Lordon [j.lordon@tees.ac.uk](mailto:j.lordon@tees.ac.uk)**

Jean Lordon began her career working with disabled adults before moving into the sport sector and local government in 1987. Jean has worked for Tees Valley Sport since its inception in 1999 becoming Executive Director of the Partnership in 2005.

Jean has a particular expertise in strategic planning and partnership development and has extensive project management and practical experience particularly in the field of sports development. She has managed the local implementation of national programmes including Places People Play the 2012 Legacy programme, has served as a member of the County Sports Partnership Network Board and other national programme steering groups. Most recently Jean oversaw the evaluation of the DfE Disability Sport Funding to CSPs and was part of the steering group, led by the English Federation of Sport, which commissioned and managed the analysis of the effectiveness of the nationally delivered Playground to Podium programme.

### **Fergus McIntosh [FergusMcIntosh@ukactive.org.uk](mailto:FergusMcIntosh@ukactive.org.uk)**

Fergus looks after the accounts of current ukactive members, ensuring they are engaging with their trade body while reaping the benefits available. In addition, Fergus works to engage with new organisations and bring them on board.

### **Hazel Wright [h.wright@tees.ac.uk](mailto:h.wright@tees.ac.uk)**

Hazel works as the Well-being Services Coordinator at Teesside University and is responsible for the development and coordination of the Healthy Universities initiative. This includes all well-

being related services and facilities, as well as development at a strategic level and incorporation into all University schools and departments.

She has an undergraduate degree in Sports Science and started working in the fitness industry which eventually led to a career in health development/improvement at Sunderland Council and now at Teesside University. As a result she completed her Masters degree in Public Health in 2010. She has a great passion for helping people to improve their health and her main interests lie in physical activity and nutrition, social marketing/health communication, health and the built environment and also global health/international development. She is currently continuing to work towards developing Teesside as a Healthy University and is committed to her involvement in working to sustain and develop the National Healthy Universities Network.