

Executive Summary

Health Impact Assessment of the Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project



Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is commonly defined as a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population, and the distribution of those effects within the population.^[1]

[1] World Health Organisation (WHO), European Centre for Health Policy (1999), Health Impact Assessment: main concepts and suggested approach: Gothenburg Consensus Paper.

The Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project worked with Chinese and Portuguese communities in Antrim and Cookstown and went beyond the level of support previously provided by interpreters on a sessional basis.

The Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project was developed by United Hospitals Trust to address the needs of local minority ethnic communities. These had been identified as part of a wider consultation carried out by the Trust's Equality Monitoring Unit.

The six month project, which ended in March 2006, encompassed on site and telephone interpreting, translation of letters and other materials and outreach work with the community. It also contributed to service development by feeding back information, co-ordinating training and awareness raising for staff and community members.

As a member of the Northern Investing for Health Partnership, United Hospitals Trust undertook a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of the Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project to help inform others in the Partnership of potential areas where they also could impact on the health and well-being of minority ethnic communities.

It was recognised that, due to the increasing numbers of ethnic minority population

groups, this pilot project could assist in developing a more comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of these communities. There was also a recognition that, whilst the project would empower these communities to access local hospital services, there may be a number of potential negative health impacts regarding this specific project and service delivery in general.

A Steering Group was established to conduct a HIA during 2005 and this summary report provides an overview of the process and findings.

Overview of the HIA

Aim

The aims of the HIA were to provide information on the potential impacts on health and well-being of the Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project for local minority ethnic Chinese and Portuguese communities and to influence future planning of the wider Northern Investing for Health Partnership organisations.

Timetable

The HIA was conducted during 2005 and utilised a case example for Northern Ireland

Service Delivery to Minority Ethnic Groups^[2]. The final recommendations of the HIA were incorporated into a work plan for the project.

Process

The HIA adopted the rapid appraisal method using information and data that were readily available. The approach included undertaking stakeholder workshops with the local Chinese and Portuguese communities.

Appraisal and Recommendations

The HIA information was reviewed and analysed in the context of a number of the wider determinants of health relating to three broad areas: emotional well-being, e.g. self esteem, confidence, empowerment behaviour, discrimination, stereotyping; personal circumstances e.g. education, employment, mental health, poverty, housing, community structure and; access to Health and Social Care Services e.g. understanding/accessing health and social care services. It was found that there were major potential mental health impacts related to accessing services, understanding how services work and being able to communicate more effectively.

Issues that emerged from the HIA

- Need to raise awareness across Northern Investing for Health Partnership



organisations and influence future practice of Partnership organisations in relation to minority ethnic communities.

- Lack of awareness of relevant cultural practices.
- Need to increase awareness of services provided by Northern Investing for Health Partnership organisations and other opportunities for improving health and well-being within minority ethnic communities.
- Need to address inequity among minority ethnic communities in relation to personal and social circumstances.

The HIA process produced 12 recommendations. These aimed to maximise the anticipated positive impacts and reduce any potential negative impacts which could arise from the Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project. Nine of these were incorporated into the six month project work plan. The remaining three, listed below, identify actions to be considered by the Northern Investing for Health Partnership which could have a positive impact on the health and well-being of local minority ethnic groups.

[2] Watt, P & McGaughey, March 2006, Improving Government Service Delivery to Minority Ethnic Groups: Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and Scotland.

Recommendation

<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>To be addressed by:</u>	<u>Potential Lead Agency</u>
Raise awareness of migrant worker issues across different sectors e.g. training/posters and leaflets.	Project/UHT HPSS Others	
Recurring issues need to be flagged up to other stakeholders through other stakeholders groups.	Project Support Team Unit Northern Investing for Health Inter-agency Forum Regional Equality and Human Rights Steering Group	Northern Investing for Health Partnership
Need to review capacity of various sectors/ organisations to address internal and external multi-cultural information and service needs by proposing an audit of NifH partners' relevant policy procedures.	Northern Investing for Health Partnership	Northern Investing for Health Partnership

Next Steps

This HIA helped to shape the Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project and has already generated a significant amount of interest from many Northern Investing for Health Partnership organisations. The next step is to engage partners and explore the potential for progressing the above recommendations within their organisations.

United Hospitals Trust, one of the Northern Investing for Health Partnership organisations, undertook a HIA of its Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project. This highlighted, for other partners, potential areas where they also can impact positively upon the health and well-being of local minority ethnic communities.

For further information on the
Bi-lingual Advocacy Pilot Project contact:

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