

Pip Farman

"The North of Scotland Public Health Network"

Public Health/health improvement Networks have been defined as "linked groups of public health/health improvement professionals, working in a co-ordinated manner across organisations and structural boundaries with a common strategic agenda to promote health improvement and reduce health inequalities for a given population, thus maximising shared resources in a co-ordinated way."

The Northern Public Health Network was formalised as a collaboration between NHS Grampian, NHS Highland, NHS Orkney, NHS Shetland and NHS Western Isles in the autumn of 2002. Remote and Rural Areas Resource Initiative (RARARI) funding was sought to appoint a Northern Public Health Network Co-ordinator and to develop the Network within the framework of a Managed Clinical Network. Dr Eric Baijal, Director of Public Health NHS Highland on behalf of the North, has led the Network.

The remit of the NoSPHN is to improve health and reduce health inequalities across the North of Scotland where working together will be more effective. To achieve this, those involved work collaboratively, where this adds value, to plan and deliver equitable high quality and effective public health services/activities for the benefit of the population of North of Scotland.

The Network is not seen as a "structure" but as a vehicle for agreeing and delivering agreed objectives of common interest across the North. In this way groups and individuals are drawn into the Network to achieve project objectives – thereby enabling the Network to evolve around agreed pieces of work.

The presentation will describe the work of the NoSPHN, challenges and approaches including a recent evaluation of the work of the Network.

Pip graduated with a BSc in Applied Biology and a Certificate in Teaching in the late 80's. She began her working life in London in health promotion roles becoming Deputy Health Promotion Manager with the then Merton and Sutton Health Authority. She completed an MSc in Health Promotion in 1993.

She moved to Scotland in 1992 working for Highland Health Board as an Alcohol Development Officer and subsequently became Health Promotion Manager in 1995. Following a return to work after maternity leave in 2000 Pip has worked part time within Public Health with a wide range of responsibilities including: the Cancer Strategy; a Palliative Care Needs Assessment; Coordination of New Opportunities Fund (Lottery) Programmes; Health Impact Assessment; Patient Involvement and Public Engagement work; Learning and Development Programmes; and has a particularly strong interest in life circumstances and tackling inequalities in health work.

In July 2006 she was seconded to the post of North of Scotland Public Health Network Coordinator (retaining some NHS Highland responsibilities also) and works across the five Northern NHS Board areas of Grampian, Highland, Orkney, Shetland and Western Isles. The key role of the Co-ordinator is to lead and manage the development, delivery and monitoring of a work plan for the Network, to ensure partnership and effective networking and to support the implementation of public health policies and activities across the North.