

GAY MENS HEALTH PROJECT



R e p o r t 2 0 0 1

Gay Men's Health Project Report 2001



This report is made possible by the following



2001 The Year in Numbers

- 1 full STI Screening clinics per week (Wednesdays)
- 1 fulltime counsellor
- 2 the number of clinics per week
- 3 the average number of hours for the Wednesday clinic
- 4 the number of full-time outreach staff
- 5 the number of personal development courses for gay and bisexual men(2001)
- 7 the number of staff at the Tuesday clinic
- 7 the number of full-time posts for the project
- 8 the average number of members of Johnny (who work with the outreach team)
- 17 the number of staff at the Wednesday clinic
- 20 the number of men in their 20s attending the full-time counsellor(34%)
- 22 the average number attending on Tuesdays
- 45 the number of men aged 50 and older who attended GMHP clinics for the first time in 2001(7%)
- 49 the average number of men attending at Wednesday Clinics
- 58 the number of men incorporated in the counselling report
- 71 the average number of men attending the two GMHP Clinics per week
- 73 the number of MSM's diagnosed with HIV in 2001
- 102 the number of clinics at GMHP in 2001(51 Wednesdays and 51 Tuesdays)
- 105 the address of Outhouse Community Centre (the outreach and counsellor base)
- 137 the overall number of early syphilis diagnoses among MSM's in 2001
- 280 the number of men in their 20s attending GMHP clinics for the first time(44%)
- 290 the number of men seen by the health adviser at GMHP Clinics
- 299 the total number of people diagnosed with HIV in the Republic in 2001
- 628 the number of charts created for first-time attendees at GMHP clinics
- 774 the number of men tested on-site (gay pubs/clubs and saunas) for syphilis
- 966 the number of HIV tests at GMHP in 2001 (an increase of 51% over 2000)
- 1 000 the number of copies of "Such A Taboo" on services for males in prostitution
- 1 240 the number of new and re-reg for the GMHP clinics (an 128% increase)
- 1 266 the number of men seen by counsellors at GMHP clinics
- 1 353 the number of syphilis tests at GMHP in 2001(an increase of 135% over 2000)
- 1 944 the total number of syphilis test at GMHP for 2000 and 2001
- 2 502 the total number of individual men registered at the GMHP clinics since 1997
- 3 624 the total number of visits to the GMHP clinics (an increase of 42% over 2000)
- 5 241 the number of nursing procedures in 2001 (an increase of 61%)
- 11 105 the number of visits by men to the GMHP clinics since 1997
- 25 000 the number of contacts by outreach workers
- 50 000 the number of safe sex packs (condoms and lubricant) distributed by Outreach

Introduction

As co-ordinator of the Gay Men's Health Project (GMHP) I am delighted to present the annual report for 2001. Published near the occasion of our 10th Anniversary (October 2002) it represents the efforts of all the team (past and present) in providing services to the gay community. It's also at a time when HIV and syphilis among gay and bisexual men remain a cause for concern, with 72 new HIV diagnoses and approximately 137 early Syphilis diagnoses in 2001 alone¹ (appendix).

The GMHP clinical team, represented by seven disciplines, are unique in the context of STI's (sexually transmitted infections) service provision. Apart from being the only statutory gay sexual health service in Ireland (and one of the very few in Europe), the clinic environment and staff reflect the community we serve. This no doubt has added to the popularity of the project and along with the syphilis outbreak, 2001 saw a significant increase in attendance (42%) and extra resources for the project. Two recent research studies also highlight the popularity of the GMHP Clinic. Vital Statistics Ireland² reported that 28% of the 712 men living in the ERHA had attended GMHP with 19% attending other STI services. The SAKA³ research shows that of the 413 men (47% of respondents) who had tested for syphilis, 33% had done so at GMHP, with the next agencies at 21% and lower.

Meanwhile the Outreach Workers and Counsellor (based in Outhouse, community resource centre) brings GMHP's uniqueness to the community we work with. The personable and peer approach by Outreach workers has had an impact on the many promotions such as; safer sex, the syphilis campaign, mental health, homelessness, Johnny (peer group) and the personal development courses. The service offered by one full-time counsellor is busy, highlighting a growing need for counselling access.

Some important events in 2001 were; the Syphilis Outbreak Control Team and the awareness campaigns such as "onsite testing" with GMHP outreach workers and St James Hospital Staff; the launch of the report "Such A Taboo" on service needs for males in prostitution; the involvement with Gay Health Network (GHN), HIV Services Network (HSN), and the Irish (and European) Networks Male Prostitution.

In relation to HIV prevention and sexual health the Gay Men's Health Project attempts to fulfil some of the needs of an important population. This provides challenges to the Project the Area Health Boards and the ERHA to maintain quality services while at the same time increase access to an growing population. Our reports along with research indicate that a targeted health service and approach can achieve effective results and is vital as part of an overall Sexual Health Strategy.

Finally on behalf of the management of ECAHB I wish to commend the hard work and dedication of the GMHP team. Also on behalf of the GMHP team to thank the LGBT community groups and individuals and other agencies but especially the men who attended the clinic, for their supportive comments and patience.

Mick Quinlan



*Mr. Mick Quinlan and Mr. Martin Gallagher
ACEO, ECAHB Launch GMHP 2000 Report*

¹ (HIV/AIDS Reports & Epi-Insight for Syphilis details) National Disease Surveillance Centre www.ndsc.ie

² Vital Statistics Ireland – findings from the All-Ireland gay sex survey 2000(Gay Health Network/Sigma 2002)

³ Syphilis Knowledge Awareness and Action, (report in progress-GMHP).

1 Clinical Services

In 2001 the GMHP clinic experienced an unprecedented increase in numbers attending from 2 551 in to 3 624. This was due in part, to the ongoing promotion by outreach but also to client word of mouth and to the Syphilis awareness campaign⁴. It seems also that more gay and bisexual men are taking their sexual health into account and deciding to attend for screenings. The Vital Statistics Ireland report bears this out with 66% of the 1 290 respondents stating they had an STI screen⁵.

This increase has meant the medical team had to introduce various procedures to continue the smooth running of the clinic. For instance, making Tuesdays for return appointments for results, wart treatment and vaccines and Wednesdays for Drop-in, return appointments and telephone appointments for STI screenings and other services. There was also an increase in sessional medical staff, (doctors, nurses and a health adviser).



Some of the GMHP team 2001 at the launch of the 2000 report.

Overall 2001 was a very busy year for the project's clinical staff. Their continued hard work and commitment helped deliver a comprehensive free friendly and effective service even with a stretch on human and material resources. This means, that in all respects the weekly workload increased to such an extent where only by the introduction of a ceiling on client numbers allowed us to continue to provide a quality service.

Sessional staff cover is supplied to the GMHP clinic by health board staff. Though we are a separate service the ECAHB funds St James's Hospital to supply Consultant, Health Adviser and Laboratory Technician cover to the GMHP clinic. Due to work commitments Dr Bergin (Consultant in Infectious Diseases) left at the end of 2001 with the position taking up by Dr Concepta Merry (Consultant in Infectious Diseases) in 2002. Allowing us to continue to have referrals for those diagnosed with HIV or with syphilis to the GUIDE Clinic St James's Hospital. On behalf of the team I would like to thank Dr Bergin and welcome Dr Merry.

Overall 2001 was a very busy year for

⁴ Epi-insight at www.ndsc.ie

⁵ GHN/Sigma, 2002

Attendance at Clinics

Since its inception the Drop-in clinic has experienced yearly increases in attendance, in 2001 there was a significant increase of 42% (tables 1.1.1 and 1.1.2).

Table 1.1.1 Total Attendances Years 2000 & 2001

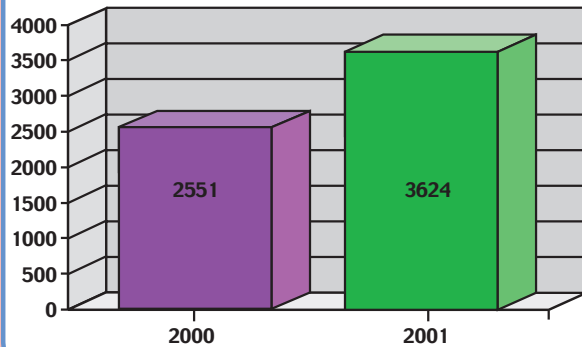
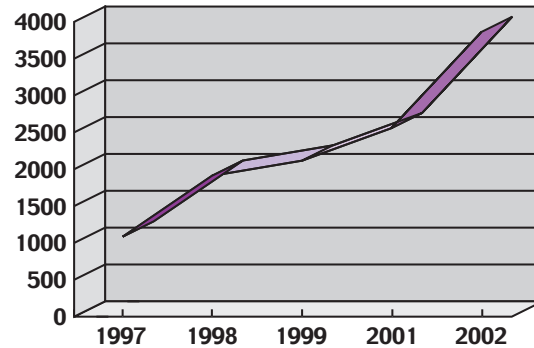


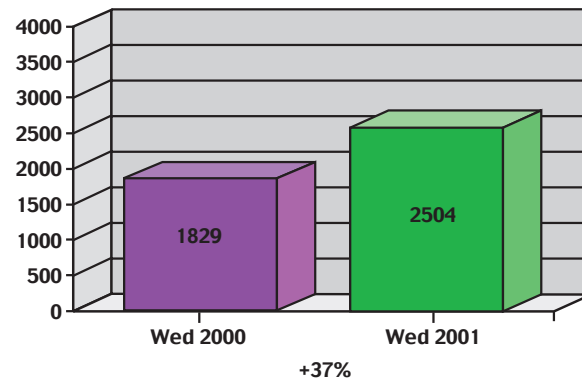
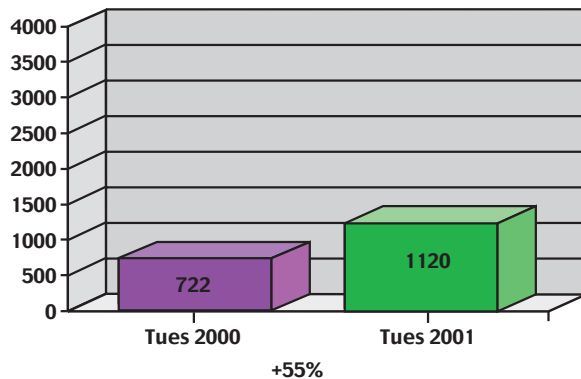
Table 1.1.2 Yearly Totals 1997 to 2001



Average Weekly Attendances

There was a 102 clinical sessions in 2001 (51 for Wednesdays and 51 for Tuesdays), with approximately 71 clients attending per week (49 on Weds and 22 on Tues). Though this meant a 37% increase on Wednesdays a bigger increase of 55% took place on Tuesdays, mainly due to returns for vaccinations or results (table 1.1.3).

Table 1.1.3 Attendances Years 2000 & 2001 by days



Total Number of First-attendees and Re-registrations*

Overall the new and re-registration numbers increased by 128% an average of 25 per week (tables 1.1.4 and 1.1.5).

Table 1.1.4 New and Re-registrations, 2000 and 2001

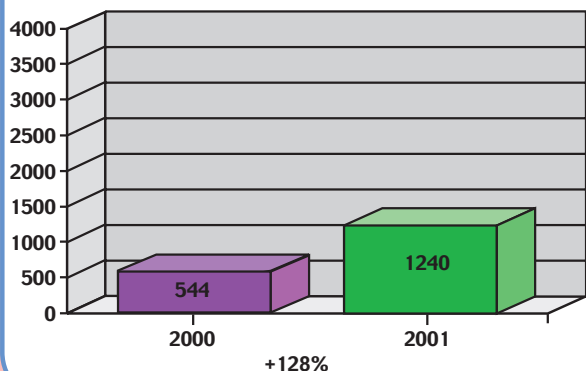


Table 1.1.5 Yearly New and Re-Registrations

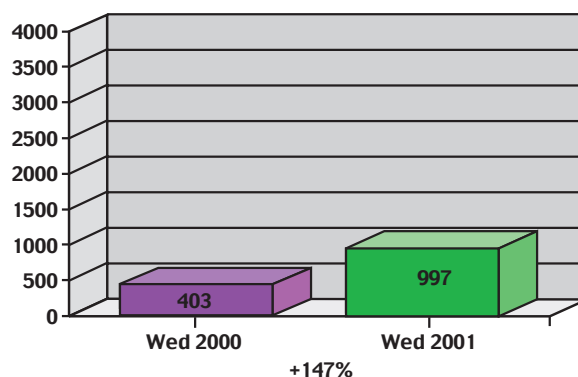
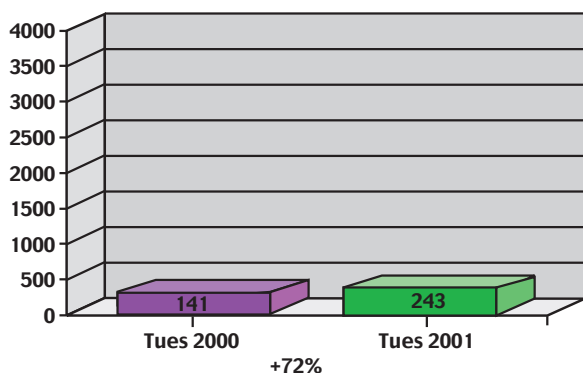
Year	Totals
2001	1240
2000	544
1999	401
1998	354
1997	301

*Note: Re-registrations are return clients who attend for full STI screening after 3 Months or more.

New and Re-registrations for Wednesdays and Tuesdays

There was an average of 5 new or re-registrations for Tuesdays with 20 for Wednesdays. Overall this represents an increase of 72% for Tuesdays with a massive 147% increase for STI screenings for Wednesdays (table 1.1.6).

Table 1.1.6 New/Re-regs Tuesdays and Wednesdays 2000 and 2001



Age Profile First Time Attendees

For this report we present the age profile of first time attendees. This allows comparables to recent studies, HIV and syphilis diagnoses and for planning and further targeting of certain age groups. In 2001 of the 638 first time attendees those aged 19 and under and those aged over 60 accounted for 1% while 21% were aged 24 and under. 45% were 29 and younger and 55% were aged 30 and older.

These are set out below the ages by 5 ranges (table 1.1.7).

Table 1.1.7 Age Range First-time attendees year 2001.

N=638	<19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50>
	1%	44%	32%	16%	7%

The GHN survey⁶ showed an age profile of respondents of 5% (<19), 50% (in their 20s), 34% (30s), 9% (40s) and 2% aged 50 and older. This indicates men in their 20s and older are attending GMHP especially those aged 40 and older but that those aged 19 year or younger are underrepresented. Overall GMHP first-time attendees fairly represent the age profile of the gay male community.

1.2

Staff and Services

The number of staff at the Wednesday clinic is three doctors, three nurses, three counsellors, three general assistants, one health adviser, two clerical staff, one outreach staff, and the co-ordinator. On Wednesdays the medical services are provided between 6.00pm and 9.00pm. It is advertised publicly from 6.00pm to 7.30pm. Services include full STI screening, blood tests (HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis) and treatments.

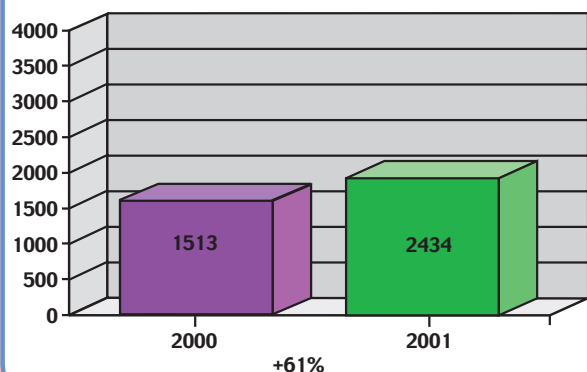
The staff numbers for the Tuesday clinic is one doctor, two nurses, one counsellor, two general assistants, one clerical officer and one outreach worker and the co-ordinator. This clinic begins at 6.30pm and ends at 8.30pm. It is advertised publicly from 6.30pm to 8.00pm. Tuesday clinics are mainly for return appointments for results, vaccines and wart treatments. First-time clients can obtain blood tests (HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis) and they receive a return appointment for the following Wednesday fortnight for results and an STI screen.

Having three doctors on Wednesdays is necessary to maintain current client numbers and services. This means attendances will remain the same over the next years if resources continue as of now. It can therefore be estimated that the GMHP will continue to see an average of 1,200 new/re-registration clients in the following years.

Nursing staff, play an important role in the provision of services not only for blood testing and vaccinations, but for further advice and support where necessary. They also encourage clients to attend for completion of the Hepatitis vaccines.

Overall the number of client contacts increased by 61% over 2000, with an average of 48 contacts per week (table 1.3.1).

Table 1.3.1 Nursing Contacts Years 2000 and 2001



Nursing Procedures

In 2001 there were 5 241 nursing procedures (blood tests and vaccines) compared to 3 311 in 2000 an increase of 58%. The Syphilis blood test accounted for most procedures, increasing by 135%, followed by HIV, (All new and re-reg clients have a syphilis test and most of them opt in for a HIV test). Hepatitis A and B testing increased by between 48% and 51%. Overall the Hepatitis vaccinations increased by 61%, and anti-hbs (the blood test after completion) by 40% (table 1.3.2).

Table 1.3.2 Nursing Procedures Years 2000 and 2001

	2000	2001	% Change
HIV	652	966	+48%
HA	542	786	+45%
HB	468	709	+51%
HC*	186	49	-73%
Syph	581	1 363	+135%
AHB	264	371	+41%
VAC	618	997	+61%
Total	3 311	5 241	+58%

*The reduction in Hepatitis C numbers was due to new procedures to test only those at risk in relation to sharing injecting equipment or if a sexual contact of an injector.

Syphilis Testing

The syphilis Outbreak among gay and bisexual men highlights how important this procedure is. In 2001 there was 1 363 blood tests for syphilis at the Clinic an increase of 135% over 2000. All men diagnosed with syphilis were referred to St James Guide clinic for treatment and follow up. The GMHP clinical services has diagnosed a significant proportion (up to 40%) of the total number of syphilis cases in the Eastern Region. The GMHP outreach workers were also involved in On-site Syphilis testing of gay and bisexual men in Pubs/Clubs and Saunas.

1.4 Counsellors

Counselling at the clinic is an important aspect of the service especially in relation to the men who are at risk. All first time clients and those retesting for HIV meet with a counsellor. The counsellors provide, pre-HIV test counselling, sexual risk assessment and clarification of services for the client. Post-test counselling is given on request, as well as to anyone receiving a HIV positive diagnose. The counsellor may also offer referrals for other services, for on going counselling or to the GMHP personal development course (PDC). Counsellors work daily in the Drugs/HIV services in the three Area Health Boards, and are assigned to the GMHP on a sessional basis.

1.5 Health Adviser

A Health Adviser (HA) was appointed to the clinic in April 2001 for Wednesday evenings. The HA's role is in advising and supporting those with an STI infection (other than HIV). The HA clarifies information and encourages the client to have their sexual contact/s attend for screenings. In 2001 there were 290 episodes of infections syphilis, gonorrhoea, and non-specific urethral infections. The health adviser is also based in the GUIDE Clinic St James's Hospital. This continues the link with clients who are referred to there for certain treatment.

1.6 General Assistants

The general assistants have the important task of meeting and greeting the clients and present them with a number (return clients with appointments use the card supplied). They also provide services to the medical staff, collecting specimens for the laboratory, directing clients to the various staff.

1.7 Outreach Workers

An outreach worker meets and greets clients in the waiting room. They hold informal chats, provide information on sexual health and other community services, reassure and offer procedural information to newcomers to the Clinic (see outreach report).

1.8 Clerical Staff

A full time medical clerical officer (grade iii) was appointed in 2001, and, with a part-time officer, they provide the very important back-up to the clinical services. Registration of clients, keeping charts and filling the hundreds of results each week, are among the many tasks they perform.

1.9 Conclusion to this Section

Overall the GMHP clinic has reached the capacity at which quality service can be provided. The number of first-time attendees will continue at an average of 12 to 18 per week. The significant increase in 2001 is due to such things as, ongoing outreach promotion, to campaigns such as the syphilis one, but perhaps mainly due to client's word of mouth on the clinic's safe environment and staff approach.

Between January 1997 and December 2001 there was over 11,100 client visits (to 400 clinics), with a total of 2,502 individual charts for men who attended, this is a sizable portion of the gay and bisexual male population in the Eastern Region.

Adequate staffing numbers, the working environment, attitudes and dedication at the clinic determine the quality of service provision. It is our intention to continue this approach and hopefully increase the number of new men accessing the services.

2 OUTREACH

Outreach is an integral part of the Gay Men's Health Project. In 2001 staff numbers was 4 outreach workers. Apart from individual contacts with men who have sex with men we are involved in community development and work closely with many groups. Below is presented aspects of our work.

2.1 Workshop list

Outreach Workers offer the following workshops:

- *Safer Sex*
- *HIV/AIDS*
- *Sexually Transmitted Infections*
- *Homophobia/Heterosexism/Bi-phobia*
- *Creating positive environments for working with gay and bisexual men*
- *Males in Prostitution*

Workshops are targeted at gay community groups and any organisation, group or discipline in contact with gay or bisexual men. Workshops are participative in style combining the dissemination of factual information; facilitated small group sessions on attitudes towards the subject matter, and skill-building work were relevant (example safer sex workshops).

Some of the workshops facilitated in 2001

- *Tallaght Rehabilitation Group (three workshops)*
- *Addiction Studies Certificate course, NUI Maynooth*
- *Outyouth (Gay and Lesbian youth group)*
- *Boilerhouse and the Dock sauna staff (four workshops)*
- *Gay Switchboard Dublin (two workshops)*
- *Open Door Men's Project, Athlone*
- *St Laurence's Youth Remand Centre (two workshops)*
- *Focus Ireland*
- *Men's peer group, St Anthony's Community Centre, Rialto*
- *The Homeless Agency (two workshops)*
- *Accord*
- *Smiley House Trust*
- *Ana Liffey Drug Project*
- *Merchants Quay Project*
- *Reach (Gay/Bi Christian group)*
- *Trinity Court (Staff)*
- *Dundalk Out-comers (gay/Bi/Lesbian group)*
- *The Extension*



GMHP Outreach Team 2001

2.2 Talks and presentations

Garda Liaison Officers, Templemore
CHAPS, Conference London

2.3 Personal Development Course (PDC)

In 2001 the GMHP Outreach Team, along with a Senior Occupational Therapist ran three eight-week long Personal Development and Assertiveness courses for gay and bisexual men. Interest in the course was immediate and facilitators experienced a very low 'drop out' rate, with the majority of participants completing each course. The courses were an extended version of the course we had initiated the previous year and has since become an on-going part of our work. A comprehensive report will be launched in 2002. (see PDC Report July 2002)

2.4 Outreach to Pubs and Clubs

Visibility on the commercial gay scene continues to play an important part of the work of the Outreach team. Approx. 50,000 condom packs were distributed during 2001. Racks advertising the project and containing up-to-date information on sexual health are also restocked on a regular basis. Condom packs were distributed at the following venues and events during 2001.

The George
Out On The Liffey
GUBU
Candy
Tease

H.A.M
Hilton Edward's
Spy
Freedom
Dublin Pride Events

2.5 Males in Prostitution

Gay Men's Health Project is the Irish convenor of the ENMP (European Network of Male Prostitution) and co-ordinating member of the Irish Network Male Prostitution (INMP). In 2001, the East Coast Area Health Board (ECAHB) and INMP launched the report "Such A Taboo"⁷ on service needs and provision for males in prostitution. With ENMP we launched the website www.enmp.org and the ENMP newsletter for agencies. Apart from the INMP involvement GMHP outreach continues with males in prostitution using public sites. The team has also made contact with men through ads offering massage services. The aim of this contact was to make men aware of the syphilis epidemic and services offered by the project.



INMP Launch "Such a Taboo"
Mr. Michael Lyons, CEO ECAHB

2.6 Johnny

Johnny is a gay peer action group. A GMHP outreach worker acts as a liaison to this group, hosting fortnightly meetings in the Outreach office at Outhouse. 2001 was the most prolific year yet for the group with a variety of work and projects undertaken.

These included:

- * *Condom pack distribution on gay scene*
- * *Writing, design and dissemination of sexual health materials*
(Including a campaign based around three caricatures of gay men: 'Steamy Stan, Sauna Man', 'Brett Honey, Disco Bunny' and 'Princess Betty, Drag Queen')
- * *Staging of 'Johnny Safer Sex Night' in The George bar*

⁷ "Such A Taboo" An analysis of service need and service provision for males in prostitution, in the Eastern Region (INMP & ECAHB Dublin 2001)

- * *Leading Dublin Pride parade with a GMHP and Johnny Float.*
- * *Presented a paper on peer education to CHAPS conference UK*
- * *Attendance at meetings and forums pertaining to gay/bisexual men's health*
- * *Training for new Johnny members*
- * *Informal peer education through friends and contacts*
- * *Information stands for World AIDS Day*



Members of Gay Peer Group "Johnny"

2.7 Homelessness

In late 2001 a pilot scheme was initiated between the Outreach teams at Focus Ireland and GMHP. This resulted in joint street-work being carried out to the homeless population around Dublin city centre. This pilot scheme, which was carried out over six months, continued into 2002 and is presently being evaluated to assess the effectiveness of such work. The Outreach Team facilitated a series of workshops with workers in homeless hostels around working with gay, lesbian and bisexual clients and working with men engaged in prostitution. These sessions were part of a training package organised by The Homeless Agency. Three training sessions were also provided to Focus Ireland. This training was centrally organised, with participants coming from various Focus Ireland projects. One outreach worker has been designated to concentrate on issues for homeless men. Resultantly he has directly worked with a number of homeless gay men and has liaised with other agencies such as The Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team for Homeless People, The Homeless Person's Unit and Focus Ireland.

2.8 Outhouse

In 2001 Outhouse, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community centre which houses GMHP Outreach team moved premises from 6 South William Street to 105 Capel Street. Unfortunately, the period of time between moving from the old building and the refurbishment of the new one meant that for a time the team was without a proper base. However, the official re-opening of the new Outhouse centre, took place early in 2002 allowing for full Outreach drop-in services to be resumed.

2.9 Youth

A member of the outreach team is also a member of the co-ordinating team of OutYouth, a youth group for gay, lesbian and bisexual and transgendered, (LGBT), young people. As well as aiding in the planning and development of the group he has also co-facilitated, with the outreach worker from Outhouse, a safer sex workshop with the group. GMHP outreach has also been involved in a multi-agency committee which has submitted a funding proposal to the Department of Education, seeking financing for the establishment of a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered youth service. This proposal was drawn up in partnership with a number of LGBT community groups, as well as with the City of Dublin Youth Services Board.

2.10 Syphilis Testing in Commercial Venues

2001 saw a dramatic increase in the number of Syphilis cases being detected among men who have sex with men in Dublin. In response GMHP Outreach Team, together with medical staff from St James' Hospital, carried out a series of 'on-site' Syphilis testing sessions in commercial venues between May and October. The outreach team initially negotiated with venue owners/managers who agreed to participate in this creative initiative. The venues/clubs that took part were: The Boilerhouse; The George; Out on the Liffey; Candy; The Dock; HAM. The outreach team approached men in these venues, speaking to them about Syphilis and offering them the opportunity to test there and then. Following a successful pilot scheme in May testing was carried out in three block periods and a total of 774 men tested.

During November and December and January (2002) the outreach team surveyed over 800 men on the 'gay scene' about their knowledge of Syphilis, the Syphilis outbreak and their opinions about the Syphilis awareness campaign. This survey showed a high level of awareness among men, with awareness being noticeably higher in venues that were specifically targeted for on-site testing.

2.11 GMHP Clinic

An outreach worker continues to work at the GMHP Clinic on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. We find that an outreach presence offers a helpful and friendly link between the clinic and 'gay scene'/ public sex sites/ gay community groups. Many men attend the clinic as a result of contact with the outreach team and having a member of the team working in the clinic offers a sense of continuity to the sexual health promotion offered by GMHP. Outreach workers in the clinic also regularly put men in contact with gay/bisexual social groups, OutHouse, counselling services, or the GMHP personal development course.

2.12 Special Support Groups

Outreach workers facilitated and supported special initiatives such as the mental health group (IRIS) and the survivors group (Mathanas). In both cases the groups are autonomous from GMHP.

2.13 Conclusion to this Section

Outreach is an important aspect of GMHP service delivery, and has a peer element necessary for a successful project. Client contacts, attendance at the clinic, referrals along with increased demands for materials (information and condoms), development courses and training indicates this. Outreach is also important in reaching those marginalised within the community, i.e. men who have sex with men and who do not identify as gay or bisexual, male sex workers, sauna users, and those not on the social scene.

3 COUNSELLING

In April 2001 a full time counsellor was appointed to the Gay Men's Health Project. In May and June while the new offices were being prepared at Outhouse, the community centre in Capel St., the counselling service was advertised in Gay Community News and at various STI clinics in Dublin. The service was offered to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender persons. Generally clients are seen at Outhouse, and on certain days at Baggot St Hospital. Between August and December 2001, 69 clients were seen and in December capacity was reached and a waiting list put in place. Below are some relevant statistics.

3.1 Referrals

The Clients were referred from various sources, with the GMHP clinic and Outreach been the most frequent (table 3.1.1).

Table 3.1.1 Client referral sources

Sources (n=42)	%
GMHP Clinics	33%
GMHP Outreach	12%
GUIDE Clinic, Social Workers, St James's Hospital	12%
GCN Advertisements	12%
Outhouse Staff	12%
Friend	7%
Open Heart House	7%
Other	7%

3.2 Age Profile

The age representation of clients reflected a younger population with men in their 20s and 30s being the highest (table 3.2.1).

Table 3.2.1 Age Range of Clients

Age Range (n=58)	%
20-29	34%
30-39	40%
40-49	14%
50+	12%

3.3 Client Issues

Issues identified were varied most presented with relationship difficulties, followed by depression, self-esteem/assertiveness, substance abuse then jointly by survivor of sexual abuse, addictive behaviours, coming out issues, HIV positive (table 3.3.1).

Table 3.3.1 Counselling Issues

Counselling Issues	Number
Relationship Difficulties	17
Depression	12
Self Esteem/Assertiveness	11
Substance abuse	10
HIV+, survivor sexual abuse, addictive behaviours coming out	6
ACOA, Anger Management	5
Sexual Identity Confusion, Transgender	4
Bisexual/Married, Social Skills, Psychosis	3
Suicidal	3
Abusive Partner, Housing/Homelessness, Couples Therapy,	2
Stress, Prostitution, Paedophile Tendencies	1

3.4 Number of Sessions

The number of sessions per client varied, with most sessions lasting one hour on a weekly basis. 19 clients had up to 5 sessions, 7 up to 10 with one finishing at 15. 19 Clients were ongoing.

3.5 Waiting List

There were 12 people on the waiting list at the end of December, all of these had received an assessment. Due to the demand the counselling is at capacity in the short term it was decided to assess all contacts and provide the following actions: place on waiting list, refer to psychiatric services, refer to other sessional counsellors in the GMHP, refer to addiction counsellors, and refer to sexual abuse counselling services.

3.6 Personal Development Courses

The GMHP has run PDC since 2000 (see report July 2002). The counsellor has referred 12 clients to this course. For some this was an alternative to being seen immediately, while for others, it was a tandem process. The tandem

experience seems to have provided a particular powerful experience for the person involved in terms of promoting change and healing.

3.7 Gender

The service was advertised for lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people. Of the five women clients who have presented, relationship issues predominated as well. Of the transgender clients, only one had actually had the operation male to female, while the others were at various stages of coming to grips with the reality of making the transition.

3.8 Counselling Overview

Overall the clients who presented themselves for counselling/psychotherapy generally had been affected by physical and/or sexual abuse and violence in various forms and fairly frequently seemed to be using substances to try to self-medicate. Other addictive behaviours seemed to be linked with developmental issues generated in the family of origin. HIV and the fear of acquiring it are also significant factors impinging on the population.

3.9 Conclusion to this Section

Counselling has proved popular and there is a demand for increased services. This with the personal development courses allow men to investigate, reflect, and work on changes which may be placing them at increased risk.

As middle manager, the co-ordinator's role is one of facilitating planning and development, reports, budget control and estimates. Holding multidisciplinary team meetings, training and team building, administration and smooth running of the project.

As coordinator and senior outreach counsellor, continued to be involved in the promotion of GMHP services, direct supervision of the outreach team and frontline work with clients and agencies providing counselling, training and outreach.

The co-ordinator reports directly to and acts as an adviser to the Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Service Provision, East Coast Area Health Board.

In 2001 the co-ordinator was involved in presentations, representation and direct work with various groups such as;

- The Syphilis Outbreak Control Team
- The National AIDS Strategy Committee (NASC)
- The NASC Sub-committee HIV Prevention & Education.
- Gay Health Network
- Irish Network Male Prostitution
- European Network Males In Prostitution
- HIV Services Network
- Health Promotion for Homeless Committee (ERHA and Homeless Agency)
- ERHA Partnership Training
- ERHA Steering Committee for Drugs AIDS Information System (DIAS)
- National Youth Council Conference
- Prostitution in Europe (Milton Keynes)

List of GMHP Reports/Papers including other Reports where involved.

- Sexual Behaviour of Gay and Bisexual Men EHB Area (1992).
- GMHP Report 1992-1996 (1997)
- Males in Prostitution (1997)
- Hepatitis B and Gay and Bisexual Men (1999)
- GMHP Annual Report 1998 (1999)
- Male Prostitution, What is the Best Approach? (1999).
- European Resource Directory (Agencies for Males in Prostitution) (ENMP 1999)
- National AIDS Strategy Report (DOHC 2000)
- Proposals for the Review of STI Services in ERHA (ERHA 2000)
- HIV Testing Policy and Procedures, Country Report for Ireland (2000)
- GMHP Annual Report 1999 (2000)
- GMHP Annual Report 2000 (2001)
- Epi-insight -syphilis outbreak reports (www.ndsc.ie 2001)
- Such A Taboo - analysis of service needs for males in prostitution (INMP/ECAHB 2001)

5 SERVICE ACTION PLAN 2002-2003

5.1 Staff Numbers

GMHP clinical service to continue with a full complement of front-line staff.
Outreach workers and counsellor based in Outhouse.
Look at the possibility of appointing further outreach worker and counsellor.

5.2 STI Clinics for Gay and Bisexual Men

Encourage and participate in the development of an overall National Sexual Health Strategy and also for the Eastern Regional Health Authority and the three Area Health Boards. Continue GMHP participation in the promotion and development of increased access to STI services for gay and bisexual men.

5.3 Outreach

Continue making contact with men in the community: Concentrate on those at particular risk and not attending for STI screening services; young men, men using saunas, males in prostitution, those with dependant issues such as drugs and alcohol, mental health, homelessness etc.

5.4 Workshop/Forums

Continue to provide support for HIV positive men via self help group, joint work with Open Heart House, Gay Health Network and other NGO's.
Continue the highly successful Personal Development Courses for gay and bisexual men.
Continue workshops on safer sex, sexuality, sexual health, drug & alcohol use.

5.5 Training

Continue in service training for AIDS/Drugs staff and Area Health Board staff on creating environments for working with gay and bisexual clients:
Continue training for other Health Professionals, University Courses and for voluntary and community groups.

5.6 Males in Prostitution

Continue to develop the Irish Network Male Prostitution (INMP) and co-ordinate and act on the INMP/ECAHB 2001 report "Such A Taboo".

Develop the INMP outside the Eastern Region.

Continue as the National co-ordinator for the European Network Male Prostitution.

Develop and support a peer group for contacting males in prostitution.

5.7 Community Partnership

Continue Syphilis Outbreak Control Team and Outreach Work and Promotion.

Continue in partnership projects with Outhouse, Gay Switchboard and LGBT Inter-agency Youth Committee.

Weekend away groups with Open Heart House for HIV+ gay/bisexual men.

Various Publications with Gay Health Network.

With GHN Publish the Vital Statistic Ireland-findings.

Continue support of Johnny (Gay Peer Action).

Continue to develop and resource self help support groups such as IRIS and Mathanas.

5.8 Networking with International and National Groups

Continue networking with relevant groups and working in partnership to share resources and skills.

Gay Health Network (GHN).

HIV Services Network (HSN).

INMP.

ENMP.

Chaps Network England and Wales.

5.9 Communication

Continue advertising in Gay Community News and other relevant publications and provide articles on certain subjects.

Design and distribute new posters and cards and other information.

Further develop a Computer Information System to allow for the accurate recording of all aspects of the GMHP services.

Develop a GMHP Web-Page and E-Mail address.

5.10 Research & Evaluation

Publish the SAKA (syphilis awareness knowledge action by gay and bisexual men)

Input and analysis results from GMHP clinical (confidential) counselling profile forms.

Evaluation of the Gay Men's Health Project outreach, clinical and counselling service by an independent body.

APPENDIX

HIV and Syphilis Figures for 2001

Compared to 2000 HIV continues at a high rate among MSM* this with the significant increase of syphilis, shows sexual health awareness and screenings needs to be promoted heavily with this group. Below are presented some figures which act as a background and guide for development of our services.

HIV in 2001

The number of MSM's* diagnosed with HIV in 2001 was similar to the year 2000 (which had seen an increase of 80% compared to 1999). In 2001 MSM's make up 24% of the total HIV diagnoses⁸ (table 1.1).

Table 1.1 Categories of HIV results from 1985 to end December 2001

Category	Year 2001	% of Yearly Total	Total 1985 to 2001	% of Total
Intravenous Drug users	38	13%	1034	39%
Gay/Bisexual Men (MSM)	73	24%	643	24%
Heterosexual/Unspecified	173	58%	712	27%
Children at Risk	6	2%	55	2%
Others	9	3%	201	8%
Totals	299	100%	2 645	100%

53% of the males diagnosed with HIV in 2001 were MSM's, with over 80% of these residing in the ERHA.

The year on year infection rates among MSM remained the same for 2001 as 2002. But the 80% increase in 2000 over 1999 serves as a caution (table 1.2).

Table 1.2 MSM's and HIV Results for Years 1997 to 2001

Year	Total	%
2001	73	+1%
2000	72	+80%
1999	40	+8%
1998	37	-
1997	37	-

*The NDSC uses the term MSM to describe gay and bisexual men and other men who have sex with men.

Early Syphilis Numbers Years 2000 to 2001

The dramatic increase of syphilis⁹ has had a significant affect on service delivery and outreach work. In 2000 and 2001 gay and bisexual men (MSM) made up 88% of the total diagnoses with over 75% residing in the ERHA (table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Diagnosed Early Cases Syphilis

Year	MSM	Others	Total
2001	23	3	26
2000	137	17	154
Total	160	20	180



Poster used to promote Syphilis testing with Drag Queen Rentecca. Issued by the East Coast Area Health Board and The Department of Public Health, Eastern Regional Health Authority.

⁸ Ref: National Disease Surveillance Centre www.ndsc.ie

⁹ Ref: Epi-insight www.ndsc.ie

LISTINGS

GMHP Services

Co-ordination

19 Haddington Rd.,
Dublin 4
Tel: 01-660 2189
Fax: 01-668 0050
gmhp1@eircom.net

GMHP Clinics

19 Haddington Rd
Dublin 4.
Tel: 01-660 2189

Tues: 18.30hr to 20.00hr
(return appointments)
Weds: 18.00hr to 19.30hr
(new clients-walkins & return
appointments)

Outreach Team & Counsellor

Outhouse
105 Capel St
Dublin 1
Tel: 01-873 4952
Fax: 01-873 4954
gmhpoutreach@eircom.net

Eastern Region AIDS/Drugs Services

Drugs/HIV Telephone

Information Line
Tel: 1800 459 459

Co-ordination Centres for

General Outreach
Needle Exchanges
Addiction Counselling
Addiction Treatment

East Coast Area

Health Board
Centenary House
York Rd
Dun Laoghaire
Co Dublin
Tel: 01-280 3335
Fax: 01-230 0690

Northern Area Health Board

Phibsboro Towers
Phibsboro
Dublin 7
Tel: 01-830 7939
Fax: 01-8820 330

South Western Area Health Board

Bridge House
Cherry Orchard Hospital
Dublin 10
Tel: 01-624 6400
Fax: 01-620 6401

Other STI Screening Services:

GUIDE Clinic

Hospital 5
St James's Hospital
Dublin 8.
Tel: 01-416 2315/2316
www.guide@stjames.ie

GUM Clinic

Mater Hospital
Eccles St
Dublin 7
Tel: 01-803 2063

LGBT Community Groups

Johnny (gay peer action group)

Outhouse
105 Capel St,
Dublin 1
Tel: 01-873 4952
www.johnny.ie

Gay Community News

(Free Monthly Magazine)
Dublin 2
Tel: 01-6710 939
gcn@eircom.net
www.gcn.ie

Gay Health Network

Publications, Research,
Outhouse
105 Capel St,
Dublin 1
Tel: c/o 873 4952
gayhealthnetwork@eircom.net
www.gayhealthnetwork.ie

Gay HIV Strategies

Fumbally Court
Fumbally Lane
Dublin 8
Tel: 473 0599
ghs@nexus.ie

Gay Switchboard Dublin

Tel: 872 1055
Also Contact for
Outyouth
Icebreakers
Parents Support (Parents of lesbians
and gay men).
Married Gay Men's Group

Lesbian Line:

Tel: 872 9911

Outhouse

105 Capel St,
Dublin 2
Tel: 01-873 4932
info@outhouse.ie
www.outhouse.ie (pink pages)
Outhouse Provides
Resources
Drop-in Café
Information, support
Also Contacts for Groups
Bisexual
AA/NA Group
Women Only Social
Mental Health
Men Only Social
Reach
Outyouth
International LGB Support

HIV Positive Support

Open Heart House
2 St Marys Place
Dublin7
Tel: 01-830 5000
Support group for gay/bi men
living with HIV/AIDS
www.openhearthouse.ie

HIV/AIDS Sexual Health

*All-Ireland Directory of HIV and
Sexual Health Services*
www.hsn.ie

WEBSITES

Gay Health Info and Links
www.gayhealthnetwork.ie
www.gayhealth.com
www.outhouse.ie

GMHP Clinical Service

Tuesday Clinic

Tuesday's 6.30pm to 8.00pm

- Return appointments for results
- Vaccines and Genital warts treatment

Also Available

- Information & Advice
- Counselling & Support
- Condoms & Lubricant

Wednesday STI Clinic

Wednesday's 6.00pm to 7.30pm

- Drop-In and return appointments for STI Screening
- HIV Testing, Syphilis Testing, Hepatitis A&B Testing, Genital warts treatment

Also Available

- Information & Advice,
- Counselling & Support,
- Condoms & Lubricant

Gay Men's Health Project

- We provide a free, friendly and confidential, STI Clinical, services for gay, bisexual men and other men who have sex with men.

19 Haddington Road, Dublin 4.
(Beside Baggot Street Hospital)
Tel: 01-660 2189, Fax: 01-668 0050,
E-mail: gmhpsticlinic@eircom.net

GMHP Outreach Service

Counsellor

- Counselling
- Support
- Information
- Advice
- Referrals

Outreach Workers

- Support
- Referrals
- Information Advice
- Training
- Personal Development Courses
- Community welfare advice
- Free Condoms and Lube

The Gay Men's Health Project supplies a free, friendly, confidential, counselling and outreach service to gay, bisexual men and other men who have sex with men.

GMHP Outreach Services
Outhouse
Community Resource Centre
105 Capel Street, Dublin 1

T 01-873 4952
email gmhpoutreach@eircom.net
email gmhpcounsellor@eircom.net

We cover the three Area Health Boards in the Eastern Region.





An East Coast Area Health Board Service also covering the South Western and Northern Area Health Boards



**EAST
COAST
AREA
HEALTH
BOARD**
Bord Sláinte
Limistéar an
Chosta Thoir