

# GAY MEN'S HEALTH PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 2005



Some of the GMHP Team at the 2004 Report Launch Dublin Castle. From left: Colm, Karen, David, Therese, Mick, Niamh, David, Ronan and Michael.

Welcome to the 2005 Annual Report for the Gay Men's Health Project (GMHP). At the outset it's important to acknowledge that the GMHP services and this report would not be possible without the hard work and commitment of the team and the support of the HSE executive management. Also, special thanks to all our clients, to the groups and agencies and the men on the scene who complemented us. In 2005, our work in sexual health education and prevention, diagnoses, treatment and support is as vital as ever, with HIV and other STIs continuing to occur. For instance, another fifty seven gay or bisexual men were diagnosed with HIV, bringing to over 750 the number MSM (men who have sex with men) living with HIV in Ireland (source HPSC 2006).

In our 13th year, the GMHP is the only statutory gay health service provider in Ireland. We are now part of the HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster (Management and Clinic) and HSE Dublin North East (Outreach and Counselling). Although covering mostly Dublin city and county, many men, groups and agencies from all over Ireland use our services. We also network extensively with Gay Health Network (GHN), HIV Services Network (HSN), AIDS & Mobility Network, the LGBT Network, and in Europe with the Correlation Network. Details of our service are available by contacting us or on the HSE and GMHP website.

## SOME 2005 HIGHLIGHTS

- "20/20 Visions of Gay Health," 3rd All-Ireland Gay Health Forum, Dublin Castle, kindly launched by Mr Sean Power TD, Minister of State and Chair of the National AIDS Strategy Committee.
- The third All-Ireland Internet Survey on gay men's sexual behaviour (with The Rainbow Project and Sigma Research).
- Commissioning "ARK" (Queens University Belfast) to write the original report for the 2003 and 2004 surveys.
- Involvement and support for the Hate Crime Survey organised by Johnny (gay peer action group) during Dublin Pride.
- Ongoing workshops and training sessions such as the two-day course on LGBT issues for Counsellors, Psychotherapists and Social Workers.

## GMH CLINIC

The STI clinic was busy as ever; a walk-in service was re-introduced with return appointments for results, vaccines and treatments. A ceiling of thirty six for full STI screening was put in place for Wednesdays and twenty on Tuesdays, along with the appointments for results, treatment and vaccinations. This change has allowed us to continue providing a quality clinical service.

With regard to the numbers of men attending the clinic, overall there was a similarity to the previous year. New clients numbered 617, with 54% aged under 30, 25% in their 30s and 21% over 40. Over 24% of the new clients were born in countries other than the Republic or Northern Ireland, thus enforcing the need for awareness of ethnic diversity and requirements. Further details of this client group will be published in the report "Men from Afar" June 2006.

There were a total of 4,725 visits with 1,800 STI screens in 2005. Nursing procedures numbered 7,980, HIV (1,456), syphilis (1,568), and hepatitis B (856) blood tests. 881 men received blood tests on completion of the hepatitis B vaccine course. Diagnoses of HIV, syphilis and gonorrhoea were similar to rates in 2004. There were 1,300 counselling sessions at the clinic for pre HIV testing and other issues.

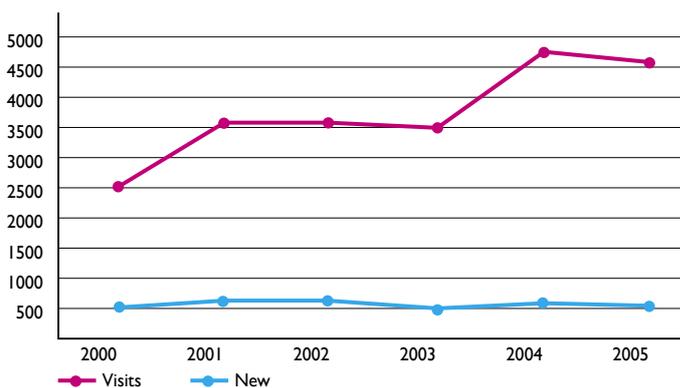


Figure 1. New Clients and Visits Years 2000 to 2005

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Tom Doyle, Director Yorkshire Mesmac, Mick Quinlan, Co-ordinator GMHP, Sean Power TD, Minister for State, Department of Health and Children, Robert Goodwin NHS, UK at the Launch of the GHF3 in Dublin Castle.

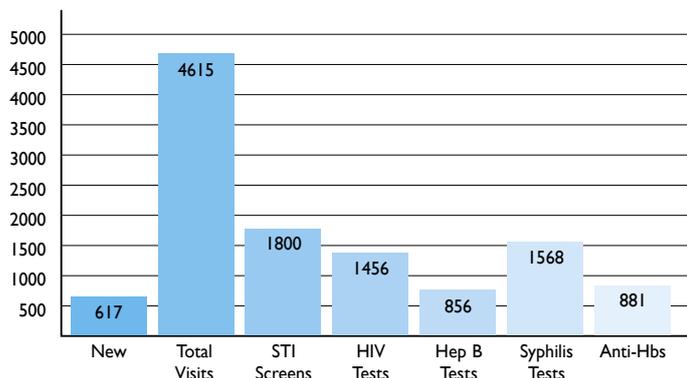


Figure 2. Numbers clients and services at GMHP 2005

## OUTREACH

The Outreach team based in Outhouse, (LGBT Community Centre) continued to be busy with individual client contacts, interventions, publications, distribution of safer sex packs, and dealing with the increased demand for training. They provided community workshops such as "summer loving" on various topics for gay and bisexual men and five of the popular personal development courses. The team also engaged in partnership work with Gay Health Network (GHN), Belongto (LGBT Youth Project) and Outhouse (LGBT Community Centre). Importantly outreach is heavily involved in joint work with Johnny (gay peer action) distributing "Rubber Up" packs and information in gay commercial venues; also the Hate Crime survey during Pride 2005 with over 900 respondents (Hate Crime Report 2006).

## COUNSELLING

The counsellor service based in Outhouse was always in great demand in 2005. Nineteen persons received ongoing, intensive psychotherapy. The waiting list is twenty four months, though anyone who asks is given an assessment interview. Of the fifty three persons assessed, fifty were referred to therapists, with three choosing to go on the waiting list. Of those receiving assessments, the ages were equally distributed over

the 20s, 30s, and 40s, with 8% being 50 and over and 10% were born in other countries. Addictions, relationships issues, depression, developmental delays, trauma, domestic violence, and surviving sexual abuse were the main presenting issues.

## CO-ORDINATION

The work of the co-ordinator reflects the business of the project and the other demands in supervision, co-ordination, promotion, research, training, publications and partnership work. Involvement in networks such as mentioned above and both national and steering committees such as the National AIDS Strategy Committee, the National Knowledge Attitude Behaviour Survey (KAB) and others. The goal for 2006 and beyond is to continue managing GMHP to deliver a quality and effective service, making it more accessible by using translators for languages and for deaf gay and bisexual men and by advocating for increased resources to develop the work of the GMHP. In relation to this, an extensive report and plan will be presented to the HSE in 2006 which reflects the desire to further develop and maintain a Gay Men's Health Service which caters for the needs of the community we serve.

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[www.gaymenshealthproject.ie](http://www.gaymenshealthproject.ie) for Services, Reports and Links



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