

CAWT – Making a practical difference to health and social care in the border region

Progress review summary – Dec 2010

Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT) is delivering a 12-project cross border health and social care programme called 'Putting Patients, Clients and Families First' with funding from the European Union's INTERREG IVA programme. This is the first time that such a large scale, strategic approach has been adopted in delivering cross border health and social care services. The 12 projects selected span a wide range of health and social care activities and have now reached a stage whereby patients and clients are benefitting directly from new and enhanced services in the border region. These cross border services and projects include:

- Appointment of 12 additional eating disorder therapists in the border region;
- Improving services for older people in the areas of telehealth, telecare and social supports;
- Improving education for children and young people with diabetes and developing specialist pre-pregnancy care clinics for women with diabetes planning pregnancy;
- Investment in sexual health services to establish new clinics in the border region;
- Establishment of cross border acute hospital services in the areas of ENT, Urology and Vascular;
- Health and social care organisations working in partnership with the community sector to tackle alcohol abuse via the '*Time IVA Change Border region alcohol project;*'
- Support to people with disabilities by providing them with alternatives to traditional day care services and the piloting of a cross border awareness programme which aims to change attitudes towards people with disabilities and to improve access to buildings, goods, services and information in their localities;
- Development and delivery of programmes which aim to improve training, education and opportunities for 'hard to reach' groups such as Travellers and vulnerable women;
- Development and implementation of a community based approach to managing obesity which will positively impact on the health and well-being of children and their families;
- Development of a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to the delivery of specific interventions for Autistic Spectrum Disorder children and young people experiencing transitioning through the '*Turning the Curve*' project;
- Improving outcomes for children through an interagency approach and the piloting of Locality Planning Groups in the border region;
- Development of programmes aimed at enhancing the cross border mobility of staff within health and social care.

Thus the complete programme is focused on enabling patients and clients to have better access to quality health and social care services with the potential for enhancing choice in care pathways, as well as promoting and protecting health and well being and reducing health inequalities. In doing so CAWT is working in partnership with the community sector who are delivering a number of key projects.

Some project highlights

The Acute Hospitals project

This project involves establishing acute hospital services in the areas of ENT, Urology and Vascular in the border region and has a target of 6,700 patients over the project lifetime and to date almost 50% of this target has been met. The primary reason for this is the successful establishment of a cross border Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) service between the HSE Dublin North East in the Republic and the Southern Health and Social Care Trust in Northern Ireland. So far 3,129 patients (of which 859 are from the Southern Trust area) have benefitted from this cross border collaboration, with ENT waiting lists in the HSE Dublin North East area significantly reduced by facilitating ENT consultants from Northern Ireland's Southern Trust to work in Monaghan Hospital. Furthermore HSE Dublin North East patients are now able to access inpatient care in Northern Ireland's Daisy Hill and Craigavon Hospitals. This cross border service will continue after the EU funding period. In relation to the cross border Vascular service 190 patients from the Western Trust and HSE West have been treated in the Erne Hospital, Enniskillen to date.

Sexual health services

New sexual health services have been rolled out in the Southern Trust and Western Trust areas of Northern Ireland in 2010. Due to the EU investment the Western Trust has been able to more than double the number of sexual health service clinics available in the Trust area. 252 patients have been treated in the WHSCT area to date. In total 659 patients have been treated in the SHSCT area at Daisyhill Hospital Newry since the project commenced there in October 2009. New sexual health clinics will be established in the HSE border area during 2011 so that there will be a network of comprehensive sexual health services right along the border corridor.

Cross border social inclusion project

The CAWT Social Inclusion project is delivering training and health programmes to targeted groups of vulnerable women as well as Travellers across four delivery sites which are Inishowen, Co. Donegal; Castlederg, Co Tyrone; Monaghan Town and South Armagh. Six groups of women are being targeted by the project: New Mothers, Older Women, Women Living with Cancer, Women Living with Mental Ill-Health, Women Living with Domestic Violence and Mothers of Disabled Children. Delivery began in September 2010 and to date 15 programmes have been delivered to 195 women. This includes a behaviour medicine programme for women living with a cancer diagnosis, a carer's support programme for mothers of children with a disability and a "Confidence to Question" programme for older women. Health Impact and Social Inclusion monitoring tools have been developed and will be implemented from January 2011.

'Time IVA Change' border region alcohol project

The 'Time IVA Change' project has arisen out of a recognition that alcohol harm and alcohol culture are common problems in the border region and that joint and sustainable action is required to tackle it. Through a community partnership between the health and social services across in the border region and the agencies and organisations who deal with the effects of alcohol harm on individuals, families and

whole communities, the project is piloting new ways of working to prevent people progressing to the stage where alcohol becomes a serious harm factor for them and their families. There are a number of aspects to the project including a process called 'Community Mobilisation.' This approach involves the project team working with local communities in developing local responses to alcohol issues that engage a wide range of stakeholders. To date the Community Mobilisation process has established 15 pilot sites and has engaged with over 170 groups. The other aspects of the project include an early intervention service and a family skills programme called the 'Strengthening Families' programme. Both of these are now underway and will see direct beneficiaries during 2011.

Other cross border work

In addition to cross border work funded by the EU INTERREG IVA programme work CAWT has delivered a number of practical cross border projects during 2010. This includes supporting the first cross border Specialist Advanced Trauma and Life Support course on the island of Ireland held in October 2010. The event was co-ordinated in partnership with the Department of Health and Children, Department of Defence, Defence Forces Ireland Medical Corps and the 204 TA (North Irish) Field Hospital. Also in October more than 100 clinical staff and nurses from both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland attended the first ever cross border conference in Farmleigh house in Dublin on sharing the latest techniques and developments in day case surgery. This was organised in collaboration with the Department of Health and Children, the British Association of Day Surgery, the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland and the Royal College of Anaesthetics.

2011 and beyond

CAWT will continue to implement its EU INTERREG IVA programme on behalf of the DHSSPS and the Dept. of Health and Children ensuring targets and outputs are achieved. The evaluation process has commenced and CAWT hope to appoint the independent external evaluators shortly. Focus will continue on negotiating to ensure that services and projects are incorporated into mainstream health and social care activities after the EU funding phase.