Shaping Public Health for 150 years

Dr Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer
DHSSPS, Belfast
SEARCHING FOR POTATOES IN A STUBBLE FIELD.
The Great Famine

“We well remember the aspect of the hoards of poor who thronged into the town, from all parts. Famine was depicted in the look, in the hue, in the voice, and the gait. The food of a nation had been cut off.”

Dr Andrew Malcolm, Belfast physician
“The hospitals are crowded, and every new building erected for patients is filled to overflowing as soon as it is completed.”

The Belfast News-letter, 20 July 1847
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Birth rate per 1,000 population</th>
<th>General death rate per 1,000 population</th>
<th>Infant mortality rate per 1,000 births</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>208,122</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>255,950</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>349,180</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>386,947</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
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<td>1926</td>
<td>415,151</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>111</td>
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<td>1937</td>
<td>438,086</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>443,671</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>1961</td>
<td>415,856</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>398,405</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>362,082</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>329,960</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
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</table>
Walks among the poor of Belfast

“... where nought but vice and death and poverty, held their fearful orgies...”
Dr Andrew Malcolm (1852)

“the Health of the People is the supreme law”
Dr Henry O’Neill
Dr Samuel Browne
Annual report 1888

“this unhealthy condition arises from three existing factors, viz, very variable atmosphere, excessively damp sub soil, and the employments and habits of the people”

Dr Samuel Browne
Dr Henry Whitaker

“Edinburgh which is the healthiest city in the list has attained that position by the care for which for years past it has attended to its sanitary arrangements”
Belfast shipyard early 1900s
“When data about the number of beds or of operations or of prescriptions written ... are confined to dusty, unopened files ... history will ask rather what successes were recorded in this decade in eliminating the inequalities, in reducing the morbidity and in improving the health of the population of Northern Ireland.”
“The Troubles”
Life expectancy at birth in Northern Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
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</table>
The rate of premature death has declined by a fifth over the last decade.
Investing for Health

- March 2002
- Supported by all Ministers in the former NI Executive
- Two overarching goals:
  - to improve the health of our people
  - to reduce inequalities in health

“My grandmother started walking 5 miles a day when she was 60. She’s 95 now and we haven’t a clue where she is”

*Ellen DeGeneres*
Nearly one in five people in Northern Ireland claim some form of out-of-work benefit - the highest rate in the UK.

Source: Client Group Analysis, DWP (GB) and from the Department of Social Development (NI); the data is for February 2005.

Scope: UK
Year: 2005
Updated: Jun 2008
Although the unemployment rate for 18- to 24-year-olds is lower than a decade ago, it is now three times the rate for older workers.

Source: Labour Force Survey, ONS

Scope: NI
Year: 2005/06
Updated: Jun 2005
Announcement October 17th 2005

“I am today announcing my decision to introduce legislation to control smoking in all workplaces and enclosed public spaces”

SHAUN WOODWARD
% of children aged 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 in Northern Ireland classified as being overweight or obese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997-98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2002-03</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
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</table>
Deprived Non-deprived Economically deprived Non-economically deprived Rural Urban

DEPRIVATION (20% worst SOAs) ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION (20% worst OAs) URBAN/RURAL INDICATOR

Suicide rate (per 100,000 persons)

All persons Male Female
Option 7C
Council Boundaries
An Integrated Model of Public Health

Knowledge Management

Service Development
- Quality
- Clinical Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Service Planning
- Audit and evaluation
- Clinical governance

Health Protection
- Disease & injury prevention
- Communicable disease control
- Environmental health hazards
- Emergency planning

Health Improvement
- Screening
- Employment
- Housing
- Family/community
- Education
- Inequalities
- Lifestyles

Capacity Building

Partnership Approach
Reform Proposals: HSSA

- **Integrated function reporting to RDPH:**
  - Planning, commissioning, co-ordinating, and supporting strategic delivery of Health Improvement functions
  - Service Development integral to commissioning
  - Planning, commissioning, co-ordinating and ensuring effective governance of screening programmes
  - Regional Health Protection Service
  - Should have strong research, analysis and evaluation capability
Reform Proposals: DHSSPS

- Public Health should underpin the functions of DHSSPS
  - DHSSPS to provide leadership for public health
  - support policy across range of Dept responsibilities
  - deliver statutory functions
  - ensure effective inter-departmental contribution
Last week’s In Tray
Acknowledgments and references

- Dr Elizabeth Mitchell
- Dr David Stewart Director of Public Health EHSSB
- 100 years of Public Health in Belfast, Dr Roger Blaney
- From Kos to Maastricht, monograph Dr James McKenna, Ulster Medical Journal