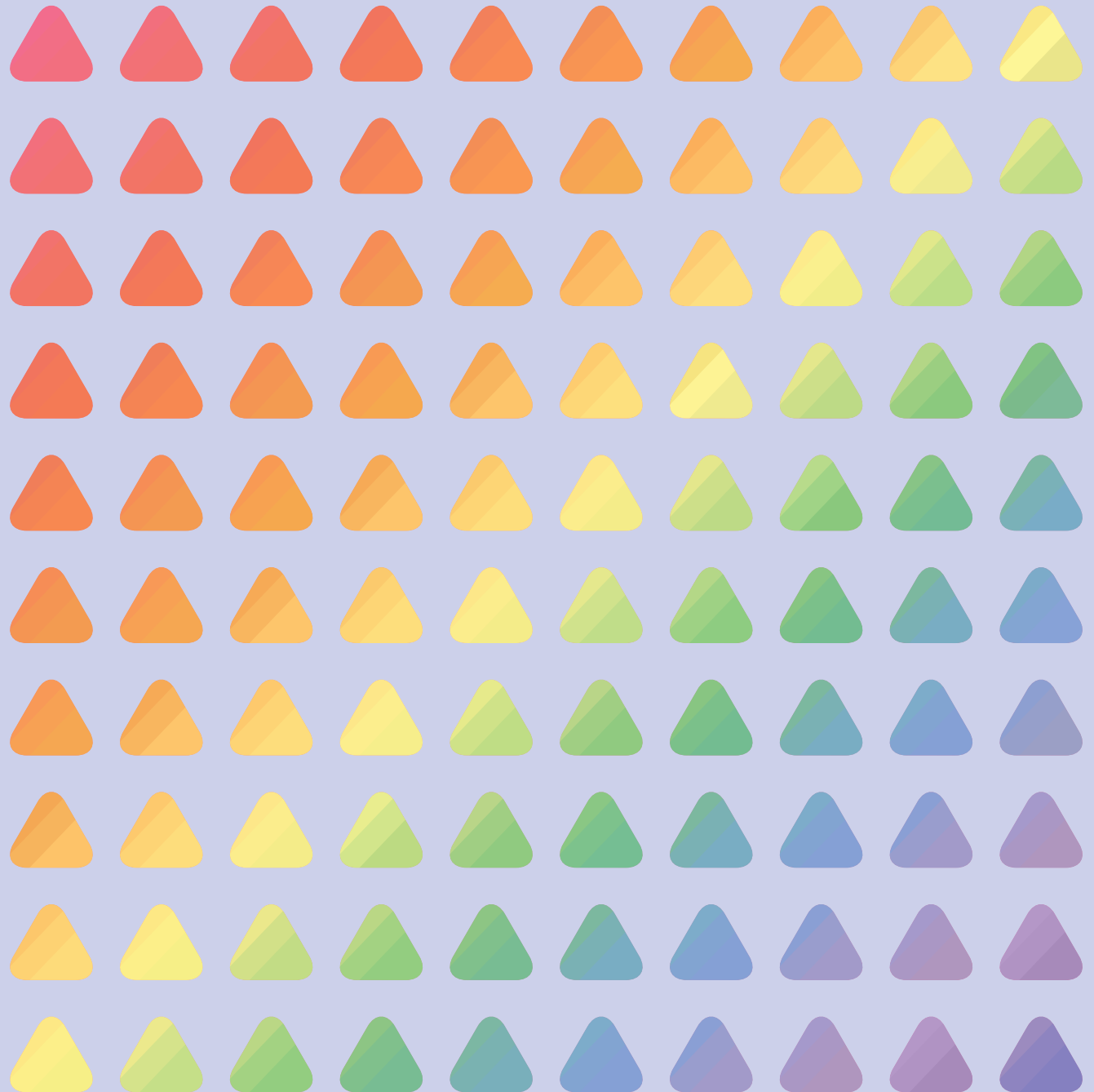


GMHP 10

Annual Report 2002



2002

The Year in Numbers

- 1 full STI Screening clinic per week at GMHP (Wednesdays)
- 2 the number of clinics per week, Tuesdays and Wednesdays
- 6 the day in October 1992 when the first GMHP clinic opened
- 10 the number of GMHP Personal Development Courses provided since 2000
- 23 the average number of men attending at GMHP clinic on Tuesdays
- 49 the average number of men attending at GMHP clinics on Wednesdays
- 54 the number of men seen by the full-time counsellor at Outhouse in 2002
- 73 the average number of men attending the two GMHP clinics each week
- 100 the number of clinics at GMHP in 2002 (50 Wednesdays and 50 Tuesdays)
- 105 the address of Outhouse Community Centre (the outreach and counsellor base)
- 285 the number of men in their 20s attending the GMHP clinics for the first time
- 648 the number of charts created for first-time attendees at GMHP clinics in 2002
- 661 the total number HIV diagnoses of MSM in the South of Ireland to June 2002
- 884 the number of respondents to SAKA the syphilis, awareness survey
- 896 the number of men tested on-site (gay pubs/clubs and saunas) for syphilis
- 1 000 the number of reports printed of the GHN, Vital Statistics Ireland survey
- 1 000 the number of reports printed of the GMH Personal Development Courses
- 1 119 the number of HIV tests at GMHP clinics in 2002
- 1 579 the number of new and re-registrations at the GMHP clinics
- 1 353 the number of syphilis tests at GMHP clinics in 2002
- 2 766 the total number of syphilis test at GMHP for Years 2001 and 2002
- 2 802 the total number of HIV diagnoses in the Republic of Ireland to June 2002
- 3 150 total number of individual men registered at the GMHP clinics since 1997
- 3 625 the total number of visits to the GMHP clinics in 2002
- 5 574 the number of nursing procedures at the GMHP clinics in 2002
- 10 000 the number printed of the GMHP leaflet Syphilis "What's Another Disease"
- 14 730 the number of visits by gay and bisexual men to the GMHP clinics since 1997



Introduction

Welcome to the Gay Men's Health Project's Annual Report 2002. Published during our 10th year celebrations and also on the 10th anniversary of the decriminalisation of male homosexual acts in the Republic of Ireland. This report represents the efforts of all the GMHP team (past and present) in providing community services to gay and bisexual men. Extended details of the report and other GMHP publications are available from 19 Haddington Road or the website.

Some important events in 2002 were, the Syphilis "onsite testing" at Pride with GMHP outreach workers and clinical staff, the GUIDE Staff, St James's Hospital and Johnny. The launch of the Personal Development Courses Report. The support and launch of Vital Statistics Ireland published by Gay Health Network and Sigma Research.

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. Staff changeover and shortages during the year increased the demand on an already overworked team. The clinical team continued to provide services equal to 2001. Meanwhile the Outreach Workers and Counsellor (based in Outhouse, community resource centre) continued in demand.

It is our intention to continue providing a quality service throughout 2003 and 2004 with initiatives in sexual health services and promotion. To contribute the proposed sexual health strategy for the Eastern Region.

We hope this newsletter will give you an idea of the services offered and to thank all those who support the Gay Men's Health Project.

Mick Quinlan Co-ordinator

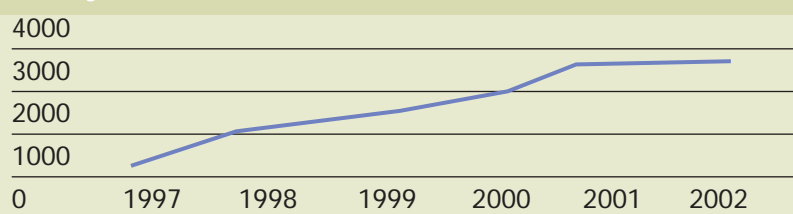
Clinical 2002

GMHP continues to provide clinical services to a significant number of the gay and bisexual male population in the Eastern Region.

The clinical team of doctors, nurses, counsellors, health advisor, general assistants, lab technicians, secretarial and outreach staff were as busy as ever. Having already reached capacity numbers attending at the clinic in 2001 this number remained in 2002.

There was a 100 clinical sessions in 2002 (50 for Wednesdays and 50 for Tuesdays), with an average number of 72 clients attending per week (49 on Weds and 23 on Tues). Overall the new and re-registration numbers increased by 19% with an average of 32 men attending per week.

Yearly Totals 1997 to 2002



3 625 attendances at the clinics in 2002 a similar number to 2001.

Table 1

New and Registrations

Year	Totals
2002	1579
2001	1240
2000	544
1999	401
1998	354
1997	301

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

Table 2

Apart from the high number of men returning for regular STI screens, a significant number of men attend the clinic for the first time. For instance in the last three years 1999-2002 over 1 800 men were first-time visitors. Most men have never had an STI screen, hepatitis or HIV test previous to this visit.

Age Profile First Time Attendees

The age profiles of first-time attendees allows comparables to recent research studies as well as the HIV and syphilis diagnoses helping towards planning and further targeting of certain age groups. In 2002 there was an increase in attendances by men under twenty, from one to four percent, though the 20s and 30s age group remain constant there was a slight drop for those in their 40s and over 50.

Age Range First Time Attendees Year 2001 and 2002

Year	Number	<19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50>
2002	648	4%	44%	32%	14%	6%
2001	638	1%	44%	32%	16%	7%

Table 3

The Vital Statistics Ireland survey showed the age profile of respondents as 5% (<19), 50% (in their 20s), 34% (30s), 9% (40s) and 2% aged 50 and older. This indicates men attending the clinic in their 20s might be underrepresented and those older are higher. Overall though first-time attendees to the GMHP clinic fairly represents the age profile of the gay/bisexual male community.



Mr Michael Lyons CEO, ECAHB
Launching VSI

Nursing

The number of client contacts with nurses increased by 3% with an average of 50 contacts per week

Nursing Contacts

2434	2499
2001	2002 +3%

Table 4

Nursing Procedures

In 2002 there were 5 574 nursing procedures (blood tests and vaccines) an increase of 6%. While the Syphilis blood test accounted for most procedures they increased by 3%, followed by HIV which increased by 16% (All new and re-reg clients have a syphilis test and most opt in for a HIV test). Hepatitis B testing increased by 6%. Overall the Hepatitis vaccinations remained at similar numbers with anti-hbs (the blood test after completion) increasing by 13%.

Nursing Procedures 2001 and 2002

	2001	2002	% Change
HIV	966	1 119	+ 16%
HA	786	779	-
HB	709	753	+ 6%
HC*	49	106	+ 116%
Syphilis	1 363	1 403	+ 3%
AHB	371	418	+ 13%
VAC	997	996	-
Totals	5 241	5 574	+ 6%

* Hepatitis C is offered to those at risk in relation to sharing injecting equipment or if a sexual contact of an injector. This testing increased from 49 to 106 (116%).

Table 5

Syphilis Testing

The rise in syphilis among gay and bisexual men highlights how important this procedure is. In 2002 there was 1 403 tests (3% increase). There was total of 2 766 syphilis tests since January 2001, of which 45% were first-time visitors to the clinic. All men diagnosed with syphilis are referred to St James Guide clinic for treatment and follow up. GMHP clinical staff diagnosed a significant proportion (up to 40%) of the reported total number of syphilis cases in the Eastern Region. The GMHP outreach workers were also involved in the On-site Syphilis testing of 896 gay and bisexual men in Pubs/Clubs and Saunas and at Dublin Pride.



Drag King and Queen* Rentecca and Sid Viscous.

Conclusion to this Section

In the seven years January 1997 to December 2002 there was over 14,720 client visits (to 500 clinics), with a total of 3 150 individual men registering.

Overall the GMHP clinic has reached the capacity at which quality service can be provided. The significant numbers attending is due to such things as, ongoing outreach promotion campaigns and client's word of mouth on the clinic's safe environment and friendly approach by staff. 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.

Outreach 2002

In 2001 there was four outreach staff, this was reduced to two in 2002 thereby affecting the work output and contacts. Apart from outreach on the scene contact can be made with the outreach workers by telephone, email or by calling-in to Outhouse. In 2002 a sizeable amount of the outreach workers time was spent providing one-to-one support in this way, as

well as providing support over the phone to men on issues from sexual health screenings to isolation and relationship problems. Outreach workers are also involved in community development and work closely with many groups providing training workshops, advice and referrals. In 2002 many workshops were provided to groups, agencies and health board staff and university courses on addiction and social studies.



PDC report launch

The very successful Personal Development and Assertiveness Courses have become an important part of GMHP's ongoing work. The courses for gay and bisexual men are co-facilitated by the outreach team and a senior occupational therapist. In 2002 during the 8th course the report and evaluation was launched. To meet some of the ongoing needs of the men who have completed the course a network (PDN) was established in 2002. Any man who has finished any of the courses can join. The GMHP team provides monthly workshops to PDN on topics such as Sexual Assertiveness, Stress Management, Coming Out and Internalised Homophobia.

The Outreach team and other GMHP staff had a presence on the Dublin Pride Parade with the Outreach Mini-bus and safer sex team leading the parade ably supported by "Johnny" members. A special "sexual healthy night" was held with gay and bisexual men in one of the gay bars.

Early 2002 saw the continuation of a pilot "street work partnership" with Focus Ireland Outreach. The Outreach Team also facilitated training for service providers to homeless people. One outreach worker is in direct contact with a number of homeless gay men and liaised with other agencies such as The Multi-Disciplinary Outreach Team for Homeless People, The Homeless Person's Unit, as well as Focus Ireland and The Salvation Army.

In 2002 there was an increase in men from ethnic minorities accessing GMHP services and gay social venues. The Outreach team liaised and provided information on GMHP with relevant service providers. Such as the Refugee Health Centre, Unaccompanied Minors (Baggot St Hospital), Access Ireland. The team also worked directly with immigrant men, providing support around sexual health, discrimination and isolation.

A member of the outreach team aided the planning and development of OutYouth, a youth group for gay, lesbian and bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) young people. GMHP also participated in a multi-agency committee which submitted a successful proposal to the Department of Education, for the establishment of a LGBT Youth Project resulting in the employment of a full time youth worker.

The GMHP Outreach team were active in the syphilis on-site testing in gay venues and Dublin Pride as well as the promotion and designing of "What's Another Disease" leaflet with "Drag King and Queen" Rentecca and Sid Viscous. The team also surveyed men for SAKA (Syphilis Awareness Knowledge and Action). Over 800 respondents showed a high awareness of the epidemic with 47% testing for syphilis most in the previous 6 months.

A vital function of the GMHP project's work is though outreach and community development. Continuing to highlight sexual health awareness and HIV prevention and education with the men on the scene and those not on the usual scene, men using saunas, the public sites, males in prostitution. This necessitates a full quota outreach workers to adequately reach this at risk population.

Counselling 2002

In it's second year the counselling service continues to prove popular and in great demand. The waiting list introduced in 2001 was still in place at the end of 2002. 54 different people were seen. 20 men had continued from 2001, while the rest were first-timers. Of these, 16 were from the waiting list, while a further 16 were placed on the waiting list by the end of 2002. Clients are referred for counselling from various agencies and outreach, including self-referral. The current waiting period is over a year.

The age representation of clients reflect a younger population with men in their 20s and 30s being the highest 70% (74% in 2001). In 2002 more men aged 20 and less and those aged 50+ were seen with one man in his 60s.

Age range men receiving counselling

	<20s	20-29	30-39	40-49	50>
2002 (N=54)	4%	24%	46%	11%	15%
2001 (n=58)		34%	40%	14%	12%

Table 6

Issues identified were varied and similar to 2001 except in relation to sexual abuse survivors. Substance abuse, depression, psychiatric issues, co-dependence, HIV+, ACOA, sexual abuse survivor and relationship issues remain the highest number of issue for men presenting. These are followed by coming out, bisexual/married, institutional survivors and

adopted, with cross-dressing, transgendered, sexuality confusion and underage interests being the least frequent.

The number of sessions per client varied, with most sessions lasting one hour on a weekly basis. 35 clients had up to five sessions each, 5 had received up to 15 and 11 had over thirty sessions.

Counselling is one of the most sought after services provided by GMHP. Outcomes demonstrate that designated services contribute to the overall well being and contribute to dealing with risky practices by the men involved. Ideally GMHP could use two counsellors to continue to provide this much needed service and reduce the waiting list.

Co-ordination

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. Involvement 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 East Coast Area Health Board. In 2002 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)
- Best Health For Children Steering Committee (ECAHB)
- Social Studies Course, Trinity College
- Addiction Studies Course, Trinity College



Mr Martin Gallagher ACEO, ECAHB and staff from GMHP Annual Report 2001 Launch

Service Action Plan 2003-2004

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

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

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, mental health, homelessness etc. and those with dependant issues such as drugs and alcohol. Continue to distribute the safer sex packs (50 000) with Johnny to gay and bisexual men.

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.

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 voluntary and community groups.

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. Continue partnership and support with community groups, Outhouse, Gay Health Network, Johnny. Continue networking with relevant groups and working in partnership to share resources and skills.

Continue advertising in Gay Community News and other relevant publications and provide articles on certain subjects. Develop a Computer Information System to allow for the accurate recording of all aspects of the GMHP services. Develop a GMHP Web-Page.

Publish the findings from SAKA (syphilis awareness knowledge action by gay and bisexual men) Input and analysis results from GMHP clinical (confidential) counselling profile forms. Ongoing evaluation of the Gay Men's Health Project outreach, clinical and counselling service by an independent body. Hold a joint research internet project with SIGMA in July 2003.

GMHP Clinical Services,

19 Haddington Road, Dublin 4. T: + 353 1 6602189 E gmhpclinic@eircom.net

The Clinical services are for all gay, bisexual men and other men who have sex with men. They are free, friendly and confidential. Details of procedures are available on request.

Wednesdays 6.00pm to 7.30pm. Drop-In & New or Return Appointments.

Full STI Screening and blood tests (HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis), results, treatments and vaccines are provided on Wednesdays. All new clients or men with symptoms are advised to attend on Wednesdays.

Tuesdays 6.30pm to 8.00pm. Return Appointments and Drop-In. Results, Genital Wart Treatment, Hepatitis Vaccines and Blood Tests only. Men for the second or third hepatitis vaccine attend this evening and do not need an appointment. Return clients can avail of the syphilis and HIV Blood tests. First-time clients can have blood tests, but they receive a return appointment for the following Wednesday fortnight for results and an STI screen.

The Doctors provide the medical service screenings, treatment and advice and support. Also referrals if necessary for further treatment or other medical investigations.

Nurses and the phlebotomist staff provide blood testing and vaccinations and further advice and support where necessary. They also encourage clients to attend for completion of the Hepatitis vaccines.

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 three Area Health Boards, are assigned to the GMHP on a sessional basis.

A Health Adviser (HA) in sexual health, advises and supports 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. The health adviser is also based in the GUIDE Clinic St James's Hospital. This continues the link with clients who may be referred to there for certain treatments.

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

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.

The medical clerical officers 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.

GMHP Outreach Services,

Outhouse Community Centre, 105 Capel Street, Dublin 1.
T: +353 1 873 4952 E: gmhpoutreach@eircom.net

Outreach is an important aspect of GMHP service delivery, and has a peer element necessary for a successful project it 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, homeless, drug or alcohol problems, sauna users, and those not on the social scene.

Contact can be made with the outreach workers by telephone, email or by calling in. Providing support and advice to men on issues from sexual health screenings to isolation and relationship problems.

The outreach team can provide training and facilitation of the following;

- Homophobia/Bi-phobia and Heterosexism
- Safer Sex
- Coming-out
- HIV/AIDS
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Creating positive environments for working with gay and bisexual men
- Male prostitution

The workshops are targeted groups, agencies, organisation or disciplines 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 where relevant.

They support the following groups through administration or facilitation:

- Johnny (gay peer action group)
- The Personal Development Courses for gay and bisexual men
- Gay Health Network
- Irish Network Males in Prostitution

Visibility on the commercial gay scene continues to play an important part of the work of the Outreach team. GMHP distribute 50,000 safer sex packs (2 condoms and 2 lubricant) to gay and bisexual men. Racks in the venues advertising the project and containing up-to-date information on sexual health are restocked on a regular basis.

Networking and liaison with local, national and international groups and agencies.



GMHP Counselling Services,

Outhouse Community Centre, 105 Capel Street, Dublin 1.
T: +353 1 873 4952 E: gmhpcounsellor@eircom.net

Counselling services at Outhouse are free, friendly and confidential. Introduced first in 2001 the counselling service has become very busy. This means there is a waiting time for services. All men individuals requesting counselling are seen first for one assessment to determine when and what type of involvement is needed. In some cases persons are referred to other counsellors or services.

The service, primarily for gay and bisexual men is also available to lesbian and transgender persons. Generally clients are seen at Outhouse, and on certain days at Baggot St Hospital.

People have attended with issues such as, risky sex practices, low self esteem, depression, psychiatric issues, co-dependence, substance abuse, HIV+, ACOA, sexual abuse survivor and relationship issues coming out, bisexual/married, institutional survivors, adopted, cross-dressing, transgendered, sexuality confusion and underage interests being the least.

Overall the clients receive counselling/psychotherapy and an average number of sessions. This with the personal development courses allow men to investigate, reflect, and work on changes which may be placing them at increased risk.

Co-ordination

19 Haddington Road, Dublin 4
T: +353 1 660 2189 E: mick.quinlan@erha.ie or gmhp1@eircom.net

As middle manager, the co-ordinator's role is one of facilitating planning and development, producing reports, budget control and estimates. Holding multidisciplinary team meetings, training and team building, administration and smooth running of the project. Involvement in the promotion of GMHP services, direct supervision of the outreach team and frontline work with clients and agencies providing counselling, training and promotion. The co-ordinator reports directly to and acts as an adviser to the East Coast Area Health Board.

List of GMHP Reports/Papers including other Reports where GMHP involvement 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)

GMHP Annual Report 2001(2002)

Report on the Personal Development Courses for gay and bisexual men (2002)

Vital Statistics Ireland-findings from the all-Ireland gay sex survey 2000 (GHN 2002)

Interventions for a syphilis outbreak ERHA (epi-insight newsletter NDSC 2002)

Some of these will be available on the website in PDF format.

GMHP Fulltime and Sessional Staff 2002

Project Co-ordinator	Mick Quinlan(COSW) Senior Outreach/Counsellor
Counsellors	David Wyse (Senior Counsellor) Niamh Banks Therese Hicks Leoni Masterson Mary Sexton Nekani
Doctors	Shay Keating Nuala Kilcoyne Rosie Merton Ceppie Merry Consultant in Infectious Diseases
General Assistants	Noel Kennedy Michael McGrane Justin O'Brien
Health Advisors	Jacinta Mosely Clair Coleman
Nurses/Phlebotomists:	Linda Latham Aine Healy Mairead Fahy Rose Knot
Outreach Workers	David Carroll Ronan Watters Michael Barron
Receptionists	Christopher Booth Sinead O'Brien Andrea McKeon

websites:

www.gaymenshealthproject.ie
www.johnny.ie
www.outhouse.ie
www.ecahb.ie
www.ndsc.ie

www.gayhealthnetwork.ie
www.gcn.ie
www.erha.ie
www.dohc.ie