

## CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

### Developing a National Training Programme for Health Behaviour Change for health professionals in the Irish Health Service

17<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Integrated Care, Dublin, 08-10 May 2017

Mairead Patricia Gleeson, Maria O'Brien, Aileen Scott, Orlaith O'Reilly

HSE, Ireland

---

**Introduction:** (comprising context and the problem statement) The Health & Wellbeing Clinical Programme Team of the Health & Wellbeing Division of the HSE has developed a framework called Making Every Contact Count (MECC).

Ireland has a population of almost 5 million, there are 30 million contacts within the health service annually, 14 million of these in General Practice settings. Hence it is important to harness the wider health care professional community and "Make Every Contact Count" in clinical settings

**Short description of practice change implemented:** Over the past number of years health behaviour change training has taken place within the health service, in the main, this has focused on brief intervention training and has been delivered through face to face programmes which have had limited reach in terms of training the target audience of healthcare staff in Ireland. We are developing a training programme to train approximately 60,000 healthcare staff over the next 5 years to deliver brief interventions in their routine interactions with patients. Staff will complete this training through an online blended learning environment.

**Aim and theory of change:** The aim of the project is to develop a standardised online training programme and a standardised blended learning training programme for health service staff to give them the knowledge and skills to raise the issue of lifestyle behaviour with clients and to support clients to make sustained behaviour change. The training will enable staff to achieve the learning outcomes by providing them with core knowledge and skills to deliver a brief intervention in relation to all of the following lifestyle risk factors: tobacco use, alcohol consumption and other substance misuse, physical inactivity and an unhealthy diet in their daily consultations .

The training should enable staff to explore their own attitudes and beliefs in relation to health behaviour and behaviour change

Attain the key information and knowledge in relation to the specific health topics: tobacco, alcohol and substance misuse; physical activity; healthy eating and weight management.

Develop the interpersonal skills to enable them to conduct an intervention with patients using a client centred approach.

**Timeline:** The training programme will be available to staff in 2017 and the aim is to have the target audience of approx 60,000 staff complete the programme over the next 5 years.

**Highlights:** (Innovation, Impact and outcomes) The end product will be an innovative training package to enable staff to Make Every Contact Count that is available as a fully online solution and as a blended learning solution. All online modules should be accessible on desktop and mobile devices. For the blended learning solution, the online modules will be augmented by a face-to-face skills into practice module that health professionals will attend after they have completed the online modules.

The training package will include the development of a Trainers Programme to deliver the skills in to practice elements of the training and will be delivered to a cohort of staff identified by the HSE as trainers.

**Comments on sustainability:** Long term commitment to training is necessary.

**Comments on transferability:** The escalating cost of chronic diseases both for individuals and their families along with the costs to the health and social care systems is an issue for all developed countries, having an innovative training programme is a key action.

**Conclusions:** (comprising main findings) Implementation of this training will involve a culture change within our health system. It will involve a move from solely a focus on training of staff in behaviour change techniques to a more integrated approach of Making Every Contact Count.

**Discussions:** Organisational commitment and clinical leadership will be essential to the rollout of training otherwise the impact will be limited and short term.

**Lessons Learned:** Developing the training package highlights the complexity of leading and managing change.

---

**Keywords:** health behaviour change; brief intervention; health professional training programme; make every contact count; irish health service

---