

Networks for Health Intelligence

Dave Jenner

**Deputy Director
East Midlands Public Health Observatory**

1. Networks and their potential benefits

- networks of practitioners
- networks of organisations

2. Health intelligence networks in England

- ways of working
- success factors

3. Health intelligence network(s) in Ireland

“A network is a grouping of individuals, organisations and agencies organised on a non-hierarchical basis around common issues or concerns, which are pursued proactively and systematically, based on commitment and trust.”

W.H.O.

potential benefits of networks

- sharing of practice, identification of good practice, learning and professional development
- pooling of expertise and capacity to tackle problems more effectively and efficiently

what's in it for the practitioner?

- “People generally belong to networks because they believe they gain either knowledge and/or support from them.”
- “It is particularly important to practitioners to share information about how they practice and what works and what doesn't work for them.”
- ?membership of a group/tribe/community

WHAT'S NEW

- Updated [emphasis on Food and health](#) section
- October edition of the [Public Health E-Bulletin](#)
- Information on the [Old Ways, New Days conference](#)
- September's [East Midlands Public Health E-Bulletin](#)
- [Covering letter and questionnaire](#) for the Exercise Referral Research project
- Final version of the [East Midlands Food and Health Action Plan](#)
- [Presentations](#) from the East Midlands School Food Conference
- [Annual Report of the Regional Director of Public Health for the East Midlands 2006](#)
- July's East Midlands Public Health [E-Bulletin](#)
- ['Promoting a Safer East Midlands' strategy](#)
- [Photographs from the Public Health Conference](#)
- [WWEM Project Pack](#)
- [Workplace health](#) section

"Health is everyone's business"



emphasis is the East Midlands public health network, providing strategic-level engagement for stakeholders in improving health and addressing inequalities.

emphasis helps to share best practice and learning by offering:

- A **dedicated website**
- **Extensive networking opportunities** through workshop seminars and events
- A **monthly e-bulletin** giving the latest news on how the network is improving health and reducing health inequalities
- Access to **health-themed regional networks** (see below)

emphasis on networks

Every Child Matters Regional Learning Partnership
Change for Children
Regional Seminar
Wednesday 6th December
AstraZeneca
Loughborough
Children's Services in the East Midlands

How will the curve turn unless all partners join up their efforts?



OBESITY

New campaign urges young people to know their limits

'Alcohol makes you feel invincible when you are most vulnerable' says a hard-hitting new campaign launched 16 October which will urge young people to know their limits when they have a drink.

[More>](#)

Conference: Diabetes and pregnancy: are we providing the best care?

This conference (21 March - 1 March 2007 in Sheffield) will launch the final report of the Confidential Enquiry into Maternal and Child Health national diabetes programme for England,

emphasis on networks

There are currently a number of health-themed, regional networks: [emphasis on avoidable injury](#), [emphasis on food and health](#), [emphasis on physical activity](#), [emphasis on workplace health](#). The networks bring together people from different organisations who are working on a common agenda and provide an opportunity to share effective practice and learn from each other.



Public Health Intelligence

Public Health Intelligence Network for the East Midlands

PCTs, local authorities and local strategic partnerships all need information for planning, managing, monitoring and evaluating public health action including information on:

- local demography
- health, inequalities in health and determinants of health in local populations
- local health care and the equity of provision and uptake
- outcomes and impact of local interventions and services

The Public Health Intelligence network is for those with a particular interest in these areas of public health-related work in the East Midlands. The network is facilitated by EMPHO. If you would like further information or if you would like to join the network and receive e-mail updates please email [Peter Ring](#).

Meetings, special interest groups and current projects

Analysts' Forum

The purpose of the Analysts' Forum is to support local public health intelligence work. EMPHO supports the Forum by helping to arrange, publicise, fund, and minute meetings and by providing technical support to e-mail and web functions.

East Midlands Public Health GI Network

The network exists to promote the use of geographic information and systems in the region through presentations, sharing of information and expertise. Meetings (about twice a year) are open to anyone working with geographic information in a public health context. The idea is that we learn from each other - beginners are particularly welcome! Contact [John Langley](#) to register with the network.

Training and Development

Information on training and development of public health analysts and related issues.

E.Midlands PH Intelligence Network

- established 2003
- e-mail list approx 50
- core = approx 20 PCT public health analysts + 10 EMPHO staff
- quarterly meetings
 - recent agenda items: data sharing and information governance, indices of deprivation, long-term conditions, supporting local multi-agency health partnerships, sources of lifestyle data, data from primary care, coding accidents, children's health care needs
- some sub-group working
 - population estimates, GIS, training
- ad hoc contact between members
- no e-discussion facilities other than e-mail
- one attempt at a collaborative project - modest success only!

PH Intelligence Networks in other English regions

- South West
 - SWINPHO - PH analysts - meetings & e-discussion forum
- Eastern
 - Health Intelligence East - PH analysts - meetings & e-discussion forum
 - PHISER - events with a wider target audience
- South East
 - SEPHIG - events with a wider target audience

what's in it for an organisation?

- access to additional (usually scarce) specialist expertise
- access to a larger pool of ideas/creativity/problem solving skills
- potential efficiency gains via efforts to share resources and avoid duplication
- professional development of staff

PH in English PCTs 2002-2006

- 303 Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) in England
- average 165,000 population
- “For many of the more specialist PH functions it is unrealistic for every PCT to have its own expert”
- PH Networks established covering larger areas

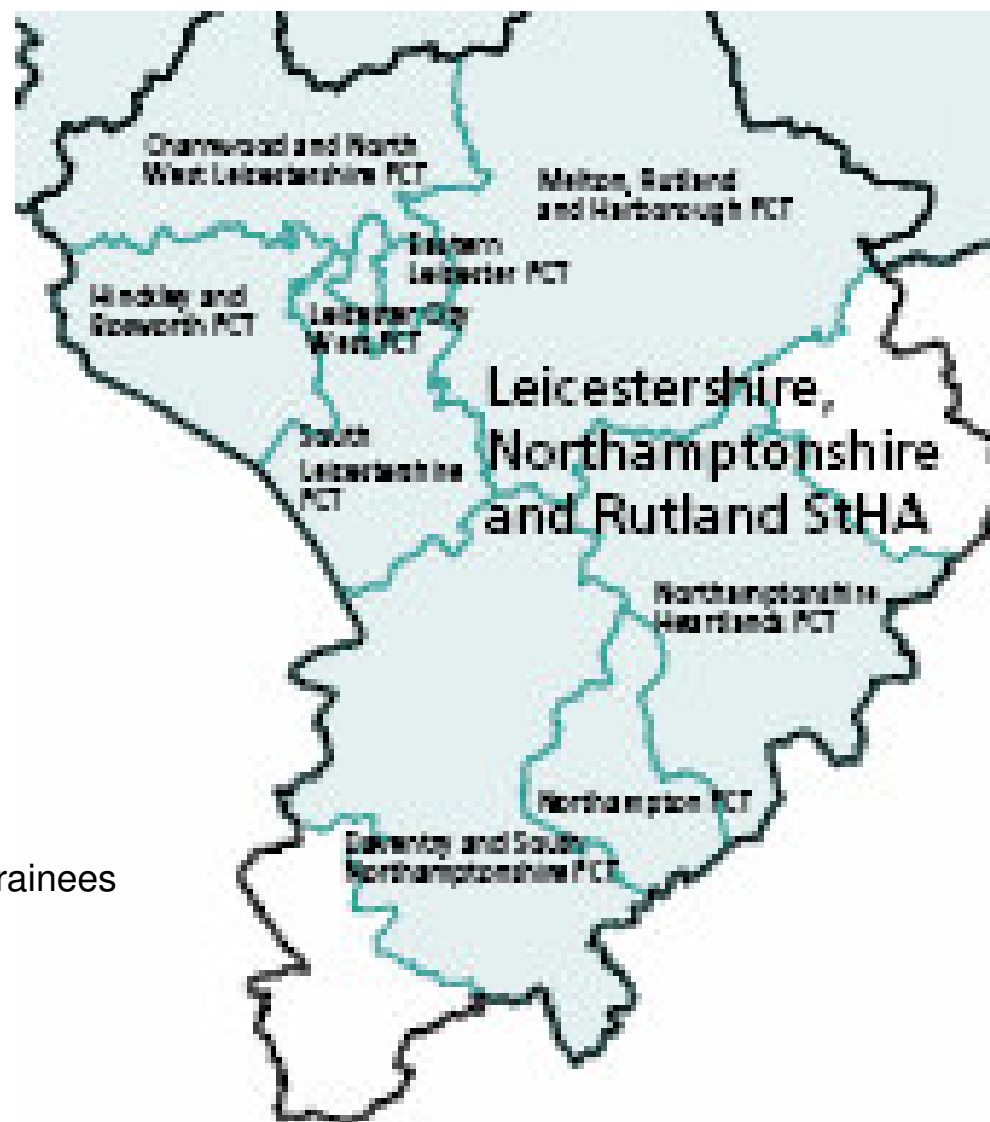
the LNR Public Health Network

9 PCTs

Charnwood & N.W.Leicestershire	240,000
Hinckley and Bosworth	96,000
Eastern Leicester	182,000
Leicester City West	147,000
Melton, Rutland and Harborough	148,000
South Leicestershire	151,000
Northamptonshire Heartlands	270,000
Northampton	215,000
Daventry and South Northants	104,000
total pop.	1.5m

Resources

9 Directors of Public Health + other PH specialists/trainees
full-time PH network coordinator
network website



Association of PHOs

- established in 2001
- now covers England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland (INIsPHO)
- sustained attempt to work as an effective network
 - each PHO has designated lead areas
 - rota for national reports on PH topics
- network glue
 - bimonthly Directors meeting and very regular between-meeting contact
 - bimonthly technical leads meeting
 - network coordinator
 - culture of sharing – plagiarism encouraged
 - website(s)
 - JISCMail group
- new challenges for the English PHOs
 - English PH Strategy “Choosing Health”
 - producing health profiles for all 386 English local authorities
 - supporting the development of public health intelligence skills in England

concluding thoughts

- practitioner networks
 - what is the “community of practitioners”?
 - meetings v e-communications
 - reciprocity
 - facilitation
- organisational networks
 - more challenging
 - reciprocity
 - predictors of success
 - necessity
 - common agenda and room for self-determination
 - sustained effort from directors
 - plenty of glue
- worth the hassle? ... definitely