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OxHA Newsletter Issue 4 – July 2006

Message from the executive director

This month has been a month of meetings and consolidation at OxHA – many new potential partners have been brought into discussions.



Planning for the Cape Town summit continues – interest in the event has come

from a wide range of fields and geographic areas. Those who have registered interest in the summit will be informed at the earliest opportunity whether they have been successful in their applications.

This month's project spotlight is on 'Healthy Food for Healthy Community', which is just one part of the Isfahan Healthy Heart Programme, a comprehensive, community-based project in Iran.

Stig Pramming

Cape Town '06

As an introduction to the summit, we are highlighting different sessions in our newsletters, here focusing on **Creating change through young people**.

The Cape Town summit will be looking at the role young people can play in influencing the development of policy around preventative diseases and how young people can encourage behavioural change around unhealthy risk factors.

In particular, the Cape Town summit will look at the outcomes of the *OxHA European Union youth summit*, which is tentatively scheduled to be held at the European Parliament, in Brussels on 11 October. The purpose of this event will be to:

- examine the degree of focus and activity around chronic diseases by the European Union;
- highlight the relevance of the three risk factors (diet, physical activity, tobacco) to the health and lifestyles of young people;
- create dialogue between key players in the European Union and young people, with the possibility of future ongoing events looking at specific policy areas;
- produce an example-setting case study, which youth-focused organisations can use to develop similar dialogue with governments around preventive health in their own country or geographical region;
- produce a short statement of recommendations highlighting the need for greater focus and dialogue with young people in shaping future policy and initiatives.

The format of the youth summit will be senate-style hearings, whereby a group of young people question invitees from the European Commission (Commissioner, Cabinet or Director-General), Committee chairs or senior representatives of the European Parliament Committee on Health, the Finnish government (currently holding the EU presidency) and industry/trade bodies. Youth participants (approx 16–24 year olds) will be students and young people from within the European Union.

It is hoped that this initiative will highlight the importance of gaining a young people's perspective on policy development and act as a spur to young people around the world to engage their own governments.

Tommy Hutchinson, project director (Youth)

Outreach and awareness-raising

There have been many meetings during this month, creating new opportunities for partnership and raising awareness of OxHA in the health community and more widely.

- Stig Pramming and Paul Mayer began discussions with the Foundation Strategy Group in Boston concerning health in the landscape of international philanthropy.
- Barbara Stocking (the director of Oxfam) and Lord Nigel Crisp (who is heading up the UK's support for health in developing countries) visited the OxHA offices to discuss chronic disease prevention in developing countries, with particular reference to health promotion in the workplace.
- Events at the King's Fund and the Royal Society of Public Health have led to significant interest in OxHA and many useful contacts.
- The European Network on Workplace Health Promotion is launching its latest initiative, Move Europe, in the next few months, which will focus on mental health, smoking, diet and physical exercise. Discussions around the potential for OxHA involvement in this initiative have been held with the coordinator of the project, Professor Giuseppe Masanotti (University of Perugia), and useful contacts have been made in the United Kingdom and Denmark.

Partnerships

Eva Olhoff presented the OxHA approach to chronic disease prevention at a meeting of the Russian branch of IBLF, the Russian Partnership for Responsible Business. The meeting was part of a Health Task Force series. Among the other speakers were Gazprom, Mondi and GlaxoSmithKline, who spoke on internal health policies and the opportunities and difficulties these companies face when implementing and measuring health programmes in the Russian employer context.

OxHA is sponsoring IBLF Russia and there are significant opportunities to work in the region, particularly around dialogues with local companies.

Publications

An OxHA factsheet on childhood obesity has been posted on the website [\[link\]](#). It contains information on the global increase in obesity and overweight among children, including statistics on physical activity and nutrition from a variety of referenced sources.

AHPI–OxHA seminar series

The Australian Health Policy Institute (AHPI) recently joined the academic network of OxHA. On 29 May it held the first of a series of three seminars – one of the activities that AHPI is undertaking to promote action and to assist success in the 'race against time' to combat chronic diseases globally. The seminar, chaired by Associate Professor Ruth Colagiuri, was entitled **Policy responses to contemporary health issues: sustainability**.

Details of the seminar are available on the OxHA website [\[link\]](#), including presentations on the public health response to sustainability, and the risk to human health of environmental change.

The next seminars in the series will be on occupational health and safety, and on new models of health promotion.

Project spotlight: Isfahan Healthy Heart Programme

'Healthy Food for Healthy Community' is one of ten projects that form the Isfahan Healthy Heart Program (IHHP). The IHHP is an action-oriented and comprehensive community-based demonstration project, launched late in 1999 in Iran. It aims to decrease the incidence of chronic disease and to reduce disability, mortality and unhealthy behaviours – particularly OxHA's focus risk factors: smoking, unhealthy diet and lack of exercise.

Healthy Food for Healthy Community encourages behaviour modification by engaging a broad spectrum of stakeholders to promote good nutrition, working together to change individual behaviours, communities and the environment. Healthier options are now more readily available, as the local catering industry is encouraged to serve healthy foods in restaurants and sandwich stalls and, in the workplace, canteen staff are being trained in healthy cooking. Non-industrial foodstuffs have been improved through, for example, encouraging the production of high-fibre, low-salt bread. Labelling of food is now mandatory, the labelling has been simplified, and there has been awareness-raising around the significance of the labelling and how to interpret it. Local media have been brought into the campaign, with the broadcast of a programme on TV called 'Healthy eating for a healthy heart'.

The current intervention phase will be followed by analysis and follow-up studies, but its impact on the lives of the local communities is already clear.

Professor Nizal Sarrafzadegan, Director, Isfahan Cardiovascular Research Center

For more information, please visit www.ihhp.mui.ac.ir and www.crc.mui.ac.ir.

Global headlines – the OxHA Alliance Alerts

Highlights of recent Alerts include:

Youth 'Unite for Diabetes' [\[link\]](#)

- Karen Siegel, a member of the Novo Nordisk Youth Panel and intern at OxHA over the summer, reports on the recent Youth Panel meeting in Washington DC, and the launch of the Unite for Diabetes campaign for a UN resolution on diabetes.



Inspiring change through school [\[link\]](#)

- A mother from Wheatley, near Oxford, contacted OxHA for assistance with a project that she and other concerned parents are launching to encourage healthy eating at school. They are working with children, parents, teachers and kitchen staff to create a movement for change in the community more widely – this Alert includes a photo of the project.

If you would like to comment on an Alert, or if you identify a story that could be incorporated on our site as an Alliance Alert, please email info@oxha.org.

Upcoming dates

OxHA members are encouraged to email info@oxha.org with any important upcoming events that they would like highlighted here and on OxHA's website calendar [\[link\]](#).

July 2006

6–9: Sixth European Conference on Health Economics, Budapest

9–11: World Conference on Tobacco or Health Fellows programme

12–15: 13th World Conference on Tobacco or Health, Washington DC

23 July – 4 August: 10-day Seminar on the Epidemiology and Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease, Colorado



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Contacting OxHA

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