

### NETWORKING HEALTH

#### WITH THE CONTINUED RISE IN HIV DIAGNOSES IN IRELAND, GAY HEALTH NETWORK REPORTS ON THE PROGRESS OF ITS THREE-YEAR PREVENTION STRATEGY.

The continued rise in HIV diagnoses, as reported in recent months, clearly reminds us not to be complacent. In the last number of years through the Real Lives Reports and Gay Health Forums, Ireland's Gay Health Network (GHN) and others have highlighted the need for more men to test for HIV, along with promotion of harm reduction activities to men outside Dublin, Cork, and Belfast, and to younger men and men where English is not the first language.

Increasing access to safer sex messages, including HIV testing information, gives rise to a need for increased testing facilities, an action already identified in the Government-published document HIV and AIDS Education and Prevention Plan 2008-2012. While the HSE's Gay Men's Health Service (GMHS) launched increased services in 2009, expansion of testing facilities in community settings around Ireland is vital if we are to continue to encourage regular STI and HIV testing among men who have sex with men (MSM).

Leading the challenge is GHN, an all-Ireland network of organisations and individuals, who have a shared commitment to promoting HIV prevention and sexual health awareness among MSM, with a particular focus on men living with HIV. The promotion of consistent condom use is to the forefront of our HIV prevention strategy and three-year action plan.

GHN met in Dublin in February to discuss the progress of this action plan and introduce actions over the next while. The Rubber Up with Pride campaigns on safer

sex and condom distribution will continue. In Dublin the peer action group Johnny ([www.johnny.ie](http://www.johnny.ie)) distributes Rubber Up packs (condoms and lube) weekly in venues across the city. There is also an identified need to increase access to condoms and lubricants for those residing outside urban centres and GHN with GMHS is currently exploring the possibility of making free condoms available through its website ([www.ghn.ie](http://www.ghn.ie)) in the next few months. The importance of awareness-raising of safer sex messages to MSM cannot be underestimated, to ensure that men can make informed decisions about the sexual risks they may take. The recent Syphilis Awareness survey of 516 MSM, conducted by GHN members and groups in Dublin and Cork, reported a 74.4 per cent recall of the campaign literature and advertisements. Notably, those who recalled the campaign literature also had a higher awareness and knowledge of Syphilis infection and transmission routes as did those who had tested for the infection.

Significantly, the advertisements in GCN were the most widely seen (87.2 per cent). GCN has always played a pivotal role in the promotion of HIV prevention and sexual health awareness, and GCN's recently deceased HIV Health Editor, Noel Walsh was an important member of the GHN.

GHN is now planning the promotion of safer sex messages widely throughout Ireland, through a new mainstreaming sexual health publication for MSM, to be

made available in GP surgeries and health centres. A new interactive website is currently being completed to provide easy access to sexual health information. BeLonG To Youth Service and The Rainbow Project NI are some of the groups developing awareness and involvement of younger MSM. The translation of our most recent publication, Living with HIV+ Sex, into nine languages will commence shortly and will be uploaded onto our website.

The GMHS along with GHN is involved in the upcoming European Gay Sex Internet Survey being held in 27 countries this summer. GHN will also commence research on the needs of HIV positive MSM in Ireland shortly, the first research project of this kind in Ireland.

Actions on HIV prevention and sexual health awareness continue, and while the recent increase in reported HIV diagnosis may be somewhat related to increased testing among MSM, the HIV prevention messages remain as significant as always: Keep informed of the risks of HIV and STI transmission. Practice safer sex - use condoms and lubricant consistently. And if you are sexually active, seek regular STI and HIV testing.

GHN has received support funding from GMHS HSE, AMI, and Friends for Friends. Email [info@ghn.ie](mailto:info@ghn.ie) to subscribe to GHN's quarterly newsletter or visit [www.ghn.ie](http://www.ghn.ie) for safer sex information in nine languages. >>>>

### LGBT YOUTH AND SEXUAL HEALTH

#### DAVID CARROLL, NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGER WITH BELONG TO YOUTH SERVICE, COMMENTS ON ADDRESSING NEW EMERGING SEXUAL HEALTH NEEDS FOR LGBT YOUNG PEOPLE.

One of the most significant and positive developments in the LGBT community over the last number of years has been the increasing visibility and voice of LGBT youth. Once a very silent group in Irish society, LGBT youth are now a confident, articulate population with their own views, passions and forthright opinions on how to get things done.

This new vibrancy is long overdue, as we know from research such as Supporting LGBT Lives (BeLonG To/GLEN) and Proud Voices (Rainbow/MYLGHT Limerick) that LGBT youth are often affected by marginalisation similar to that experienced by adults, but that it can be further compounded by additional feelings of isolation.

For LGBT youth today things are changing, on a multitude of levels. They are coming out in far larger numbers, at an earlier age too, they are no longer bereft of positive role-models, and they have a firm expectation that equality and inclusion are their fundamental rights.

Think for instance of the march for marriage, in Dublin back in September of last year. If you were there, you may remember that a very significant proportion of the crowd in attendance were young LGBT people, alongside their friends.

Likewise, during a previous campaign which BeLonG To ran, on addressing homophobic bullying in schools, I was struck by the amount of young people who upon realising that their school had not displayed the poster accompanying the campaign, actively challenged their school to do so, a courageous act - as anyone who has had experience of being LGBT in an Irish secondary school setting can attest to.

However, this new visibility and confidence brings some challenges, not least for the sexual health sector. Most people reading this will have a grasp on how difficult it can sometimes be to get LGBT sexual health onto various agendas, and this is perhaps even more the case with sexual health for LGBT young adults.

Also, the values and attitudes of youth are often different to that of my generation and those older. This becomes particularly apparent when addressing sexual health. Our community has a responsibility to meet the new emerging needs regarding sexual health for what is essentially the first generation for whom it is possible to be young, LGBT and 'out' about it. These challenges should be viewed positively, as we have a huge amount to learn from this emerging critical mass of young people.

Such previous issues which perhaps sometimes held us back as a community, such as segregation based on gender for example, are I believe, being eroded by LGBT youth. Likewise, as a community we are vastly experienced and adept with dealing with new challenges head on, the original community response to HIV when it was first emerging being just one example.

At BeLonG To we look forward to embarking on new innovative ways of meeting the challenge of developing new sexual health strategies with all LGBT youth, alongside partners such as Linc, GMHS and of course Gay Health Network.

On March 15th BeLonG To launched a major new information and support website for LGBT Youth, and includes a professionals' sub-site with a wealth of information and downloadable resources for teachers, youth workers and other professionals who work with young people - [www.belongto.org/pro](http://www.belongto.org/pro). >>>>



# ON THE ONE ROAD



## SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIS) IN IRELAND 2007

A NEW REPORT BY THE HEALTH PROTECTION SURVEILLANCE CENTRE (HPSC) SHOWS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF NOTIFICATIONS FOR STIS IN 2007 (11,915) INCREASED BY MORE THAN 20% COMPARED TO 2006.

Three infections accounted for 86% of all STI notifications in 2007 - Chlamydia (42%), genital warts (28%), and non-specific urethritis (16%). Men accounted for 54% of STI notifications, and women 45%. During 2007, as in previous years, young adults aged 20-29 years accounted for

the greatest number of all STI notifications (60% in 2007). An increase in notifications was noted for genital herpes, chlamydia, and syphilis, while a decrease was noted for non-specific urethritis (NSU), genital warts, and gonorrhoea. The full report is available at [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie).



## ANNUAL GAY HEALTH FORUM 2010 – ADVANCE NOTICE

THE 8TH ANNUAL GAY HEALTH FORUM (GHF8) WILL TAKE PLACE ON FRIDAY 18TH JUNE 2010 IN THE BEDFORD HALL SUITE, DUBLIN CASTLE. FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE [www.gmhs.ie](http://www.gmhs.ie) OR EMAIL [mick.quinlan@hse.ie](mailto:mick.quinlan@hse.ie)

## VISIBLE LIVES



VISIBLE LIVES IS A NEW RESEARCH PROJECT WHICH AIMS TO EXPLORE THE LIVES, EXPERIENCES AND NEEDS OF LGBT PEOPLE IN IRELAND WHO ARE 55 AND OVER.

The study, commissioned by the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) and funded by Age and Opportunity and the HSE, is being carried out by a team of researchers from Trinity College Dublin. A wide range of organisations are working with GLEN on the study, including older people's groups and a number of LGBT organisations.

A wide-ranging survey will be carried out as part of the project, followed by interviews with older LGBT people. The study will be completed by the end of the year. For more details contact Odhrán Allen at (01) 6728650, email: [odhran@glen.ie](mailto:odhran@glen.ie), or see the website [www.glen.ie](http://www.glen.ie).

## SHARE YOUR STORY FOR A SPECIAL ISSUE OF GCN

IF YOU ARE LIVING WITH HIV OR AIDS AND WANT TO SHARE YOUR STORY, GCN WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU.

GCN are asking HIV positive LGBT people, and those living with AIDS, to share their stories, to help people understand the reality of living with HIV or AIDS. If you would like to be included in this special project, please

email [editor@gcn.ie](mailto:editor@gcn.ie) and express your interest. The stories will be included in a special edition of GCN for Irish AIDS Day, 15th June 2010.



## NEW LGBT MENTAL HEALTH BOOKLET

GLEN AND BELONG TO YOUTH SERVICE, IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE NATIONAL OFFICE FOR SUICIDE PREVENTION, HAVE PUBLISHED A NEW INFORMATION BOOKLET ON MENTAL HEALTH FOR LGBT PEOPLE.

The 'Supporting LGBT Lives' study found that while the majority of LGBT people are doing very well and have good mental health, a significant number reported a history of attempted suicide and self-harm, and experiences of alcohol misuse, depression and anxiety. Look After Yourself, Look After Your Mental Health provides some practical information on how people can look after their mental health, and highlights the services available if LGBT people need support. The booklet can be downloaded from [www.glen.ie](http://www.glen.ie) and [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org).

Look After Yourself,  
*Look After Your Mental Health.*

Information for Lesbian, Gay,  
Bisexual and Transgender People

[www.yourmentalhealth.ie](http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie)  
[www.letsomeoneknow.ie](http://www.letsomeoneknow.ie)

## THE EMIS PROJECT (EUROPEAN MSM INTERNET SURVEY)



### THE LARGEST EVER EUROPEAN-WIDE INTERNET SURVEY AMONG GAY MEN AND OTHER MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN (MSM) COMMENCES IN 2010.

The survey aims to generate comparable data about HIV and STI behaviour; HIV and STI prevention needs, gay community characteristics, and other sexual health-related issues among MSM in Europe.

A total of 27 countries are participating, and the survey is funded by the European Commission and supported by the European Centre for Prevention and Disease Control, the World Health Organisation, and many national and international gay organisations and websites.

The online data collection will commence on 15th May

2010. The survey will be advertised and promoted on popular MSM websites and conducted in various European languages. The results of the EMIS project can be expected towards the end of 2010.

The Gay Men's Health Service (GMHS) HSE represents Ireland and GHN on the working group. This year the EMIS survey will run instead of the annual Real Lives survey, and promotion will take place from May on an All-Ireland basis. For further information email [mick.quinlan@hse.ie](mailto:mick.quinlan@hse.ie) or see [www.emis.eu.com](http://www.emis.eu.com).

## UPDATE ON THE CRIMINALISATION OF HIV TRANSMISSION

### IN FEBRUARY 2010, AN HIV POSITIVE MAN IN SCOTLAND WAS SENTENCED TO TEN YEARS IN PRISON AFTER BEING CONVICTED OF INFECTING ONE FEMALE PARTNER WITH HIV, AND HAVING UNPROTECTED SEX WITH THREE OTHER WOMEN WITHOUT DISCLOSING HIS HIV POSITIVE STATUS.

The man was convicted in January of four charges of 'culpable and reckless conduct'. It is the first time that anyone living with HIV in the UK has been convicted for failure to disclose their HIV positive status to a sexual partner when HIV transmission did not occur. The conviction for non-disclosure when HIV transmission did not occur is a legal first in the UK.

Under the wide-ranging Scottish offence of culpable and reckless conduct, it is possible to prosecute an HIV

positive person for having unprotected sex without disclosure. Such a prosecution would not be possible in England, which has a different legal system. In England, non-disclosure and transmission have to occur before a charge can be brought for grievous bodily harm.

To date, criminal prosecution for the sexual transmission of HIV remains untested in Ireland, both North and South.



## UPDATE ON HIV DIAGNOSES IN EUROPE



### 103,498 MSM (MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN) HAVE BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH HIV IN EUROPE.

In the surveillance report by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control in 2008, there were 8,504 new reported cases of HIV diagnoses for MSM in the 30 countries of the EU (27) and EEA (3). This amounts to a total of 103,498 MSM diagnosed HIV positive since 1989. The UK had the highest reported HIV diagnoses among MSM with 45,058, followed by Germany (14,531), the Netherlands (8,421), France (7,259), Greece (4,333), Belgium (4,224), Spain (3,008), Sweden (2,932), Portugal (2,553), Italy (2,086), Denmark (1,997), Norway (1,278), and Ireland (1,118). Reported figures lower than Ireland include Hungary (847), Finland (800), Poland (797), Czech Republic (671), Luxembourg, Slovenia, etc. Of the 24 countries not in the EU/EEA there was a recorded total of 5,961 HIV diagnoses. This includes Switzerland (3,334), Israel (1,101), Serbia (473), Croatia (347), Ukraine (222) among others. There were no figures available for Russia. Of significance is the reported pattern of younger men (under 30) diagnosing HIV positive. There were no figures in the report on how many MSM tested. The surveillance report comments that "many countries in the west do not systematically collect data on the number of HIV tests performed, and this lack of data is complicating the evaluation of efforts to increase the uptake

of HIV testing in Europe". Significantly in Ireland, the Gay Men's Health Service (GMHS) reports an increase of 27% in the number of men testing for HIV at its services since 2007. This increased testing may be reflected in other clinics, which might relate to the recently reported increase in HIV diagnoses among MSM in Ireland. GMHS has also introduced a second full STI screening clinic on Tuesday evenings.

For the full European Surveillance Report see the website of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control [www.ecdc.europa.eu](http://www.ecdc.europa.eu).

SURVEILLANCE REPORT



## ASIAN GAY MEN'S SEX SURVEY FINDINGS SIMILAR TO UK

A LARGE INTERNET SURVEY OF 8,000 MSM IN ASIA HAS FOUND THAT GAY MEN IN THE REGION, IN THE MAIN, HAVE VERY SIMILAR RISK BEHAVIOURS TO GAY MEN IN THE UK.

The survey is the second-largest of its kind in the world after the UK Gay Men's Sex Survey (GMSS). Conducted by the Singapore-based gay men's website fridae.com, the survey found that 45% of respondents who had anal sex with casual partners had not used a condom on at least one occasion in the last year, a figure which was 60% among men who had anal sex with regular partners. These rates are almost identical to those found in the GMSS. Other HIV risk behaviours were slightly lower, for instance 25% of respondents had not had anal sex, compared with 12% in the GMSS. Similarly the proportion with high numbers of partners was smaller.

More men in the Fridae survey had taken an HIV test than in the GMSS (75% versus 65%). HIV rates in the survey

sample were considerably lower than those in the GMSS. 5% of those who had tested for HIV had a positive result compared with nearly 12% in the UK. Of those who knew they had HIV, 62% were taking antiretroviral medication and 51% had an undetectable viral load. The success of the study has led to a larger 2010 study being conducted in nine Asian languages and English. The online data collection for the 2010 Asia Internet MSM Sex Survey on [www.2010aimss.com](http://www.2010aimss.com) ran from 1st January until 28th February 2010, after which the results of the survey will be collated and published.

(Source: [www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)). >>>>



## XVIII INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE, 18-23 JULY 2010, VIENNA, AUSTRIA



THE INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE IS THE PREMIER GATHERING FOR THOSE WORKING IN THE FIELD OF HIV, AS WELL AS POLICY MAKERS, PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV, AND OTHER INDIVIDUALS COMMITTED TO ENDING THE PANDEMIC.

It is a chance to assess where we are, evaluate recent scientific developments and lessons learnt, and collectively chart a course forward.

AIDS 2010 will coincide with a major push for expanded access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support and is also an opportunity to highlight the critical connection between human rights and HIV; a dialogue which began in earnest in Mexico City in 2008.

This year's conference theme, Rights Here, Right Now, emphasises the central importance of protecting and promoting human rights as a prerequisite to a

successful response to HIV. The right to dignity and self-determination for key affected populations, to equal access to health care and life-saving prevention and treatment programmes, and the right to interventions based on evidence rather than ideology, are all incorporated in this urgent demand for action. Rights Here, Right Now emphasizes that concrete human rights measures need to be in place to protect those most vulnerable to and affected by HIV, especially women and girls, people who use drugs, migrants, prisoners, sex workers, men who have sex with men, and transgender persons. Further information is available at [www.aids2010.org](http://www.aids2010.org). >>>>

## THE GLOBAL FORUM ON MSM AND HIV (MSMGF)

### MSM PRE-CONFERENCE, 17 JULY 2010, VIENNA, AUSTRIA

The Global Forum on MSM and HIV (MSMGF) holds an international MSM Pre-Conference Event to address issues concerning MSM and HIV worldwide before every International AIDS Conference. The event brings together activists, researchers, and service-providers from all over the world to share local experiences and develop

collaborative strategies for confronting the unique health challenges facing our diverse communities.

MSMGF are currently seeking suggestions for the next MSM pre-conference being held in Vienna on 17th July 2010. For more information see [www.msmsgf.org](http://www.msmsgf.org).

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## AIDS SPACE



UNAIDS HAS LAUNCHED A NEW SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE [www.aidsspace.org](http://www.aidsspace.org), WHICH AIMS TO MAXIMISE RESOURCES FOR A STRONGER GLOBAL RESPONSE TO HIV.

The site includes a library to share documents and resources; a directory to connect people and organisations; information on upcoming conferences and events; and much more. [www.aidsspace.org](http://www.aidsspace.org). >>>>

IN DECEMBER, MARIAN FINUCANE AND RICHARD LEWIS LAUNCHED A GUIDE COPING WITH THE DEATH OF YOUR SAME SEX PARTNER WHICH WAS PRODUCED BY THE GAY AND LESBIAN EQUALITY NETWORK (GLEN) AND THE IRISH HOSPICE FOUNDATION.

Whilst many lesbian and gay couples in committed lifelong relationships have the support of their family and friends, many others do not enjoy that level of support or acceptance and the relationship may be hidden or invisible to others. When death occurs in these situations there can be a huge difference in how a same sex partner is treated.

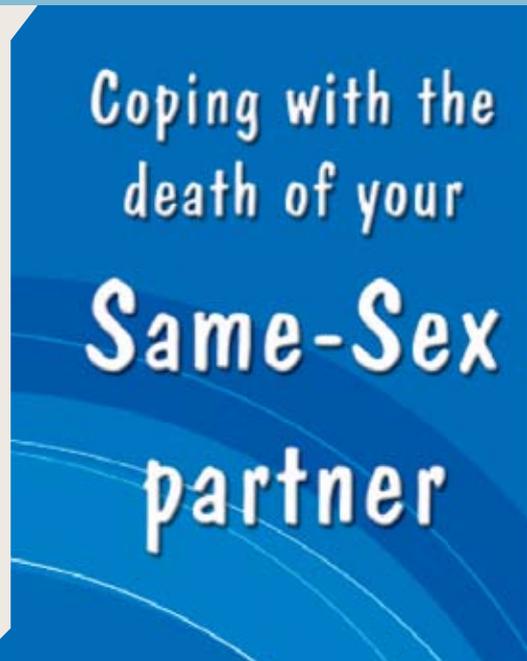
"Often, the relationship is not recognised, the loss is not recognised and the griever is not recognised. This has led to lifelong partners sitting at the back of the church, unacknowledged, unsupported and alone" said Odhrán Allen, Director of Mental Health at GLEN.

The document is an important recognition by the health care professions of loss and bereavement in gay and lesbian relationships. A recent study funded by the Irish

Hospice Foundation, (The Grief of Same Sex Couples), found that while many lesbian and gay couples were respectfully treated, health care professionals could be complicit in reinforcing the invisibility of the bereaved lesbian or gay person.

The guide offers advice and support to the bereaved on the death of their same sex partner. The key message is that lesbian and gay grief is the same as heterosexual grief, and that lesbian and gay people who have lost their partner need the same support as everyone else.

The guide can be viewed and downloaded at [www.glen.ie](http://www.glen.ie) and [www.hospice-foundation.ie](http://www.hospice-foundation.ie). ▶▶▶▶



## ▶▶▶▶ AWARD-WINNING SAUNA OUTREACH CLINIC, BELFAST

DR. CAROL EMERSON, CONSULTANT GUM & HIV BELFAST TRUST, REPORTS ON THE AWARD-WINNING SAUNA OUTREACH PROGRAMME IN BELFAST. SINCE 2005, THERE HAVE BEEN TWO SAUNAS IN OPERATION IN BELFAST, CALLED 'PIPEWORKS' AND 'OUTSIDE'. THESE VENUES CAME TO THE ATTENTION OF THE GUM CLINIC BELFAST IN OCTOBER 2008 WHEN THERE WAS A REPORTED OUTBREAK OF HEPATITIS A. SUBSEQUENTLY, AN OUTREACH PROGRAMME TO THE SAUNAS WAS DEVELOPED AT THE GUM CLINIC IN ORDER TO PROVIDE MEN USING THESE SERVICES WITH SPECIFIC HEALTH CARE; FOR HEALTH PROMOTION, VACCINATIONS AND TESTING.

We got together with The Rainbow Project, the only gay community group in the village, and planned and put out feelers! As a result we introduced monthly outreach sessions to the saunas. The Rainbow Project advertised and promoted the event on a number of websites including Gaydar and Squirt. Usually the sessions ran on a weekday evening for three hours. The Rainbow Project sexual health worker, two doctors and a nurse set up camp in a cordoned-off area of the sauna. The clients are told as they arrive that the clinic is running and get free entry if they decide to chat to us. The managers of the saunas have been very supportive of the clinics.

So what can a client expect? We ask for a name (it doesn't have to be their own) and two methods of contact so that we can inform them of results. Usually this is an email address and a mobile phone number. We ask some questions about sexual practice and offer tests. The tests that can be taken include blood tests for HIV, syphilis, hepatitis B and C and a urine test for Chlamydia. All are offered vaccination for hepatitis A and B. We usually end up discussing sexual risk, risks of unprotected oral sex, availability of post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for HIV, the need to attend a clinic for rectal swabs, and how to get results and follow up.

To date, fourteen sessions have taken place: seven in 'Pipeworks' sauna, six in 'Outside' sauna and one on The Rainbow Project premises. Almost 250 men have been assessed, tested and educated. The testing has found a number of cases of HIV, syphilis, hepatitis B and Chlamydia. Many of these men (40%) had never

tested for HIV before and 34% of men were last tested more than one year ago. Testing for HIV and syphilis is recommended every year if there is frequent partner change. The sauna clinic is successfully reaching men who either have never attended GUM clinics or have not recently had a check-up. We have found that these outreach clinics encourage men in the sauna to further use our health services. This includes attending the GUM clinic for follow-up vaccinations and gonorrhoea sampling. Most of these men prefer to turn up to the gay men's walk-in clinic on a Thursday between 5-7pm.

In a two-week survey of patients attending the sauna clinic, seventeen completed feedback forms were returned. Sixteen stated that the sauna clinic improved access, while sixteen rated the service as very good and one as good. When asked about the advantages of the clinic, five main themes were predominant: more private; easier access; shorter waiting time; familiar atmosphere; and less embarrassment ("gay friendly"). All patients surveyed stated that they would recommend the service to a friend.

The sauna outreach clinic is a very important initiative, reaching men who very often would not have been tested. Recently this was recognised by the chairman of the Belfast Trust, who gave the clinic first prize for modernisation of service. This was a bonus of £10,000 to reinvest in the clinic. We are currently waiting to hear about further funding for this project and plan to be in Outside sauna on Wednesday 24th March. A date for April will also be scheduled soon.

I would like to acknowledge all those who have worked hard to plan, promote, carry out, and test, to allow these sauna clinics to happen – Harry McNulty (Sexual Health Worker with The Rainbow Project), Dr Emma McCarty, Jonny Fyfe CLN, Yvonne Wilson CLN, and Dr Killian Quinn. It has been a very worthwhile project. Thank you to all the brave men who have come to talk to FEMALES in the sauna too!!



Dr. C. Emerson, GUM, RVH  
16/03/2010 Sauna Outreach Clinic

## JOHNNY - BRINGING HEALTH AND WELL BEING TO YOU....

THE JOHNNY VOLUNTEERS, BOTH EXPERIENCED AND NEW, HAVE BEEN OUT ON THE SCENE IN FORCE OVER THE LAST NUMBER OF MONTHS, WITH ONE KEY FOCUS - TO DELIVER THE HEALTH AND WELL BEING MESSAGE RIGHT TO YOUR DUBLIN DOORSTEP.



OUTREACH RUN 2010 (L to R) Keith Gill (Chairperson), Paul Prendergast, Jonathan O'Sullivan, Sonya Keogh (Secretary) and Keith Glynn.

Since Christmas the team has delivered a staggering 10,000 safer sex packs (condoms and lube) and distributed countless boxes of safer sex/STI information booklets to a multitude of venues across the city centre.

It's not all work for the Johnny volunteers, the regular meetings in Outhouse on Capel Street, presence at seminars/conferences, and attendance at major Gay calendar events make sure that a healthy social life is had by

all. Johnny gives volunteers the opportunity to meet new, interesting and like minded people on an ongoing basis.

You can meet the Johnny team in Dublin's city centre during the weekly OUTREACH run (distribution of safer sex packs) in The Panti Bar, The George and The Dragon every Friday from 9.30pm. You can also pick up safer sex packs in Glitz (Break for the Border) on Tuesday night or in Phromo on Thursday night. The Johnny team will be at

some upcoming key calendar events including Alternative Miss Ireland in The Olympia Theatre on 14th March, and Bear Feile, 26th-28th March to take place throughout various city centre venues. If you're not out and about over the coming weeks follow Johnny on Facebook to see the most current goings on and don't forget to keep an eye out for our fresh new website, coming shortly, bursting with everything you'll need to stay safe, happy and informed. [www.johnny.ie](http://www.johnny.ie). >>>>

## UPDATE ON SYPHILIS UPSURGE

ON 10TH MARCH LAST ANOTHER MEETING WAS HELD ORGANISED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH HSE ON THE UPSURGE IN SYPHILIS DIAGNOSES.

Presentations were made on recent statistics and actions and it was again highlighted that there is a continued need for ongoing promotion of the syphilis test and awareness of transmission. Also highlighted at the meeting was the

situation in relation to Hepatitis B among MSM and the need for promotion and availability of the vaccine. Further reports from this in the next issue. In the meantime GHN is continuing to raise awareness of STIs and the need for

testing and support. See our new advert in this issue. >>>>

## HAVE YOUR SAY

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SUBMIT YOUR VIEWS ON THIS NEWSLETTER TO FIND OUT WHAT WE CAN DO TO IMPROVE THE NEWSLETTER FOR YOU.

Do you find the newsletter useful (personally or professionally)? Are you satisfied with the content of the newsletter? Are there any particular articles or topics you would like included?, etc.

All feedback is welcome and appreciated. Email [info@ghn.ie](mailto:info@ghn.ie). >>>>

# Living With HIV+ Sex



**An information booklet for HIV positive gay and bisexual men,  
and other men who have sex with men, and their partners.**

*ghn*

Available from gay social venues, gay health or HIV agency near you from December 2009.  
Also available at [www.ghn.ie](http://www.ghn.ie)

# GET IT ON!

FOR GAY, BISEXUAL MEN & MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN

## GET INFORMED!

- HIV TESTING • LIVING WITH HIV+ SEX • PEP • POPPERS • SAFER SEX • SYPHILIS • STI'S • AVAILABLE IN 9 LANGUAGES •

[www.GHN.IE](http://www.GHN.IE)

## GET TESTED!

- HEPATITIS • HIV • SYPHILIS • STI'S SCREEN • GET THE HEPATITIS VACCINE • FREE CONDOMS AND LUBE •

**GMHS CLINIC**, Baggot St. Hospital, Dublin 4 • Tues and Weds 17.00 to 19.30 T: 01 6699 553

**GAY MEN'S CLINIC**, RVH, Falls Road, Belfast • Thurs 17.00 to 19.00 T: 028 (048 from RoI) 90 634050

Or your local STI/GUM clinic

[www.GMHS.IE](http://www.GMHS.IE)

## GET SUPPORT!

- INFORMATION • ADVICE • COUNSELLING • SUPPORT •

**GMHS @outhouse** [www.gmhs.ie](http://www.gmhs.ie)

**Johnny peer action** [www.johnny.ie](http://www.johnny.ie)

**BeLonGTo** [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org)

Or your local HIV/AIDS organisation

**Open Heart House**

**Rainbow Project**

**Gay Health Project Cork**

[www.openhearthouse.ie](http://www.openhearthouse.ie)

[www.rainbow-project.org](http://www.rainbow-project.org)

[www.gayhealthproject.com](http://www.gayhealthproject.com)

[www.OUTHOUSE.IE](http://www.OUTHOUSE.IE)

