For the first time, Minister Poots and Minister Reilly came together to see at first-hand, cross border health in action. As part of the visit, the Ministers were informed about the wide variety of EU INTERREG IVA funded health projects underway. This included briefings on CAWT’s cross border acute hospital services, the CAWT Diabetes project which has developed clinics for women with diabetes who are planning pregnancy and structured education for young people, and the CAWT GUM project which has established new sexual health clinics in the border region.

Community-based projects also featured in the Ministerial visit. Officers from the ‘Time For A Change’ Alcohol project outlined the successes achieved with the early intervention approach used by the project. Women recovering from cancer spoke movingly about the CAWT Social Inclusion project programmes and how participation in these helped in their recovery. Initiatives to promote positive mental health and the employability of Travellers were also discussed. Both Ministers were highly impressed with the Men’s Shed initiative established in Dundalk and also Armagh, with EU funding support. The Ministerial delegation heard how the Men’s Shed initiative is providing a unique and locally accessible service where older men can come together to exchange ideas, develop positive social relationships and work on collaborative projects. Some of the men outlined how the Men’s Shed helped them at difficult times in their lives.

The Ministers were impressed with the quality of the cross border initiatives underway and the benefits to local communities. Commenting, Health Minister, James Reilly said: “The work undertaken by CAWT is an example of what can be achieved through effective cross border co-operation. I am looking forward to working with Minister Poots in developing and delivering high quality care and treatment services to those who reside in the border regions.” Echoing this, Health Minister Edwin Poots said: “Reducing health inequalities is a key priority for my department. Inequalities in population health are related to inequalities in society – this should not be the case. While we face many of the same health challenges, it is important that we share ideas and co-operate to address these. I look forward to strengthening relationships further for the mutual benefit of people on both sides of the border and to ensuring that both jurisdictions continue to benefit from such co-operation.”
CAWT Obesit project - ‘UP4IT!’

The EU funding for the CAWT Obesity Project concluded as planned at the end of April. The project was a great success with over 585 families having participated in the programmes across the four delivery sites. Most encouraging is that the positive healthy outcomes achieved during the programme delivery phase are, on average, being maintained afterwards. Furthermore, 76% of participants completed the core programme, with 39% completing all follow-up sessions. There has been fantastic learning and added value achieved at all levels. A forthcoming University of Ulster report on the project will provide further insight into these achievements, alongside the external evaluation report being finalised.

In Northern Ireland, programmes have been extended for a further six months by the Public Health Agency whilst they develop their longer term plans, which will be influenced by the successful approach and outcomes achieved by the CAWT project. In the HSE West, discussions are underway regarding the extension of the project and the HSE Dublin North East are also considering their next steps. The project experiences and learning will be shared at Safefood’s all-island Obesity Action Forum workshop in June and was profiled at the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute (INDI) Nourish event in April.

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CAWT Diabetes project

The CAWT Diabetes Project is making great progress with almost 2,500 people having benefitted from the two programmes provided to date across all five Northern Ireland Health Trust areas and the HSE border counties. The programmes provided by the project are Pre-Pregnancy Care clinics for women with diabetes who are planning a pregnancy, and CHOICE structured patient education for children and young people with diabetes and their parents/carers. A showcase event is planned for September 2013 which will highlight the excellent progress and the positive feedback received from clients of both programmes. The event will focus on service user experiences and invites will be issued shortly to a wide range of stakeholders.

Recently the Project Manager, along with a parent of a child who had attended a CHOICE Programme, had the opportunity to meet both Ministers for Health during their joint visit to the South West Acute Hospital in Enniskillen. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to promote the mainstreaming of both programmes by highlighting service user experiences and long term benefits of participation.

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CAWT Cross border Workforce Mobility

Coaching and Mentoring: The Connect Coaching and Mentoring services are designed to support staff dealing with a work-based challenge, leading on change or who have recently been appointed to a new post, Coaching or mentoring will enhance performance and enable managers to be more effective in their roles. These services are now available to all CAWT partner organisation staff and can be accessed at www.hseland.ie/connectcoachingandmentoring/

Social Work: The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has included the CAWT Social Work Leadership Programme on the Post Qualifying Framework and some programme participants are in the process of making a submission to have their achievements within the programme formally recognised.

Moving and Handling: The standardised e-learning Manual Handling Awareness and Display Screen Equipment Training programmes continue to be implemented in all CAWT partner organisations with over 13,000 staff having successfully completed the programmes.

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CAWT Citizenship for People with Disabilities

Since commencing in 2010, the CAWT Citizenship project has been assisting people with disabilities in the border region, to identify and access daytime activities and opportunities. To date, over 500 people in total have benefitted from both the day opportunities services and respite support across the border region. Also, a unique Community Awareness Programme has been piloted in the border region. To share the experience and learnings from the project, a series of showcase events were held in recent weeks in Newry, Omagh and Sligo.

At these events, people with disabilities shared their personal experiences of the project and how their goals have been achieved. Brendan Carroll from Dundalk, a volunteer at Dundalk Stadium, who spoke at the ‘Doing it Differently’ best practice event in the Southern Trust / HSE Dublin North East said: “Volunteering has given me the confidence and belief in myself that I can do the job. It has made me happy and I feel part of the team.” Aoife McMorrow, from Sligo Town, one of the speakers who addressed 140 delegates at Rehab Care’s ‘Achieving Ambitions’ conference, said: “The Day Opportunities Project supported me to learn independent skills and now I live in my own apartment in town. I wouldn’t have been doing that without the project. I’ve made lots of new friends and I’m doing lots of new things like volunteering, wheelchair basketball and preparing for my driver theory test. I’m a lot more confident now!”

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CAWT Acute project

The CAWT Acute project recently supported the first all-island cross border Patient Safety Programme which is a collaboration between the Public Health Agency’s HSC Safety Forum, the HSE’s Quality and Safety Directorate and the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland. 25 participants completed the programme over a 6-month period utilising web-based seminars and workshops. Participants included senior medical, nursing, allied health professional and managerial staff from the HSE areas of Sligo, Cavan and Drogheda and also from the Western and Southern Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland. As a result, some innovative ideas have been developed in relation to the treatment of patients with chronic lung disease, the timely administration of ‘clot busting’ drugs for stroke patients and post-operative pain management.

The achievements of some of the participants in this inaugural cross border programme were recognised at the third National Patient Safety Conference held in Croke Park, Dublin in May 2013. One particular project highlighted was undertaken by Dr Jeremy Sargent, Lisa Toland and their team from Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda. This team developed a system to ensure early notification of admissions of cancer patients to their relevant specialist care team, ensuring earlier access to expert clinical input. The impact of this project not only includes more timely access to appropriate expert care, but also additional benefits such as decreased unnecessary admissions, reduction in length of stay, reduced inappropriate investigations and treatments and improved patient satisfaction. Well done to all those who involved in this project!

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The Recruit and Retain project under the Northern Periphery Programme is progressing well and following a period of detailed evidence gathering, each partner country is now working on the implementation of products and services to take forward in their respective areas. As part of a recent initiative within the project, Dr Meike Harmening, a GP from Sweden completed an observational study of a number of GP practices in Donegal and Fermanagh. This has enabled GP personnel to find out about rural healthcare in Sweden as well sharing knowledge on local techniques, information management, patient safety and practice management. It is anticipated a local rural practitioner will visit Sweden over the next few months with the aim of viewing how rural practice operates in a Scandinavian country and cascading this information back to the border region.

The Project Manager is also working on the development of other products and services that have evolved to help recruitment and retention in peripheral areas. Many of these recommendations require consultation and collaboration with cross border training institutes and senior healthcare decision makers.

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**News and Events**

### City of Culture launch Disability Awareness campaign

Pictured at the launch of the ‘Change a Little Change a Lot’ Accessibility Awards in the Derry City Council area as part of the UK City of Culture programme are (left to right): Kevin Doherty, Disability Action; Edel O'Doherty, CAWT; Brendan Bonner, Public Health Agency; Shona McCarthy, Culture Company and Madge Toye Temple, Community Awareness Programme, HSE West. Website:

### CAWT Social Inclusion project finishes on a high note

Organisers and participants pictured at the CAWT Social Inclusion project event. Standing (left to right): Mary Black, Public Health Agency; Mary Haughey, CAWT Social Inclusion Project; Edel O'Doherty, Deputy Chief Officer, CAWT and Paul Cavanagh, Health and Social Care Board. Seated: Susan Gibson, CAWT Social Inclusion Project (Derry Well Woman).

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**Event:** CAWT Diabetes Project - showcase event  
**Venue:** Armagh City Hotel, Armagh  
**Date:** 17 Sept 2013  
**Contact:** Emma Meneely, Project Manager  
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Next issue of CAWT in Action: Sept 2013