

Gay Men's Health

Annual Report 2010/11



Chief Executive

Gay Men's Health continues to develop and expand its services across Scotland. A focus on sexual health, HIV prevention, support for men living with HIV and emotional wellbeing continues to be the cornerstone of our work. But it is by no means the only work undertaken by our large volunteer force. We concluded the year with agreement and funding to expand our work from Lothian and Greater Glasgow and Clyde to the Forth Valley area of Scotland.

Highlights of our work this year include the development and launch of a major survey on PEPSE involving creation of new resources, a dedicated website, a new short video, a special edition of GM8 and a baseline survey of over 500 men.

We are also able to report on the successful Gaycon 2010 conference.

One of the things we are particularly proud of is our approach to working in partnership, both with other voluntary organisations as well as the statutory sector. Our approach is to put our energies into leading our partners and undertaking the work jointly with them, and there are a large number of individuals and organisations we have worked with. For example this year we carried out a survey on behalf of GUM in Lothian and worked with Strathclyde Police in training volunteers in Third Party Reporting.

In particular our close working ties with NHS Lothian and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde has meant the development of work that will mean a unified approach to prevention work for gay and bisexual men across the central belt. We would like to see that approach extended to all gay and bisexual men in Scotland in the future.

Much is made of the Gay Men's Health ethos and it is something that people hear again and again about our community approach. I however, make no apologies for repeating that it is volunteers from the gay communities that undertake the work outlined in this report. It is to those volunteers and the over 8000 hours that they have contributed that the thanks of gay and bisexual men in the areas that we cover must go.

Bruce Fraser
Chief Executive

Together

Together is a group for gay and bisexual men living with HIV that meets fortnightly in Glasgow. The group organises a variety of activities including discussions, workshops and days out. Members decide the issues and topics in a friendly and inclusive environment. New members are always welcome and are invited to come along 30 minutes before the group meetings for an informal chat with the facilitator. The programme content included, HIV and my body, HIV and the change in benefits. Discussions also included medication and the members were introduced to a new smartphone app produced by the University of Liverpool, which provided a summary of information relating to antiviral medication and drug interactions. The group also discussed disclosure and HIV.

Prime Time

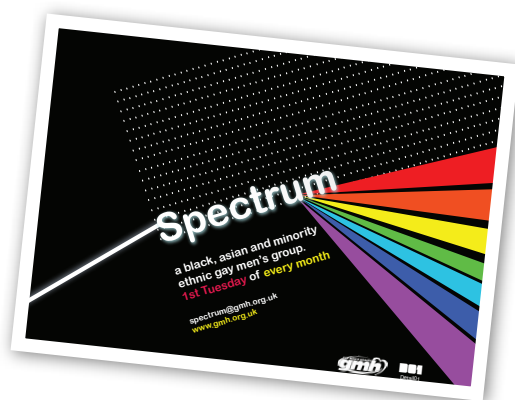
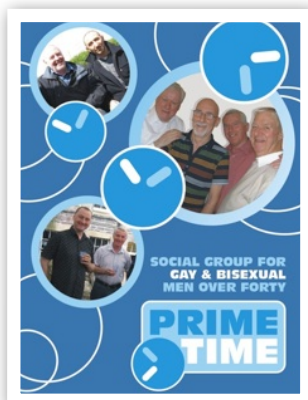
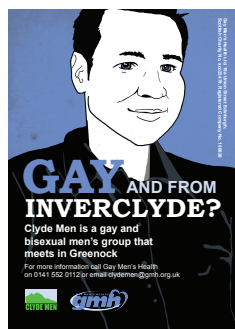
Prime Time is a volunteer led group for gay and bisexual men over 40 years old. The Edinburgh group has been active for 6 years and was used as a model for the Glasgow group, which started in September 2007. The groups have an open door policy and meet fortnightly. The meetings are very informal and provide a social space and discussion forum. Groups discuss topics of interest to members and in Edinburgh have acted as a focus group to test materials for the HIV Comeback Tour. The Edinburgh group is also represented on the LGBT Older People's forum organised by Age Concern Scotland. Regular social activities undertaken included coffee afternoons, trips to the theatre, visits to places of interest, Christmas and other parties.

Clyde Men

This is a group for gay and bisexual men from the Inverclyde area. The group meets on a regular basis in a central location in Greenock. Clyde Men provides an opportunity for men to meet in a secure location to socialise and exchange information.

Spectrum

The Gay Men's Health Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Group 'Spectrum' met initially twice monthly, then once monthly welcome new volunteers. Gay and bisexual men from BME communities do not all personally identify with terms such as gay, bisexual or BME, and it is best to welcome new members to a group without assumptions of having knowledge of gay culture or sexual health information. It is important that we assure confidentiality and create a safe place for meeting, developing work and linking with local agencies. This group ceased to operate in early 2011 and GMH is reviewing how to approach work in this area.



HIV prevention.



HIV: The Comeback Tour Campaign.

Gay Men's Health continued to play a central role in the HIV Comeback Tour Campaign, the biggest HIV prevention campaign held in Lothian for 10 years. In partnership with NHS Lothian and other organisations, through this combined approach and partnership the campaign continued to raise awareness and knowledge of HIV amongst gay and bisexual men. During the period of this report the key campaign message was: To encourage and promote the use of condoms for anal sex and regular HIV testing.

The campaign is based on research undertaken by GMH and the Medical Research Council Social & Public Health Sciences Unit, and builds on the work done by the Testing & Support Project at GMH. Phase 3 of the campaign develops the themes of Phase 2 and encourages us to challenge assumptions we make about HIV status and transmission. The campaign messages focus on condoms as our best protection against HIV transmission and regular HIV testing. Gay Men's Health volunteers have been involved in every aspect of the campaign including providing regular peer education sessions in Edinburgh's gay venues and staffing the Comeback Tour stall at various events in the city.



Make Your Position Clear.

GMH supported the Make Your Position Clear campaign, a joint initiative between NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde, NHS Lanarkshire and NHS Ayrshire & Arran. The campaign was designed to increase HIV testing and condom & lubricant use amongst gay and bisexual men. GMH helped to promote the aims of the campaign on the commercial gay scene in Glasgow through peer education interactions and distributing the campaign resources.



Gaycon 2010 Scotland's National Conference on Gay Men's Health & Wellbeing

Gay Men's Health took a lead role in organising and delivering Gaycon 2010, Scotland's 3rd National Conference on Gay Men's Health and Wellbeing.

Gaycon is the only conference of its kind in Scotland and provides delegates with the opportunity to learn from current research and best practice in Scotland and beyond in the field of gay men's sexual health and wellbeing.

Opening GAYCON 2010, the Minister for Public Health, Shona Robison said, "Scotland is leading the way in terms of an integrated approach to prevention, treatment and care of HIV. However, men who have sex with men are still at particular risk of infection". This was underlined in statistics provided by Lesley Wallace of Health Protection Scotland showing that two thirds of all new HIV infections in Scotland last year were among gay and bisexual men.

Yusef Azad of the National AIDS Trust also addressed the opening session of the conference on partnership patterns and HIV prevention amongst gay men and challenged delegates to include information on partner numbers and HIV risk in HIV prevention and health promotion campaigns directed at gay and bisexual men.

Paul Flowers of Glasgow Caledonian University told the conference that we are now facing new challenges in HIV prevention including the role of the Internet and legislative change, the rise in bareback porn and the

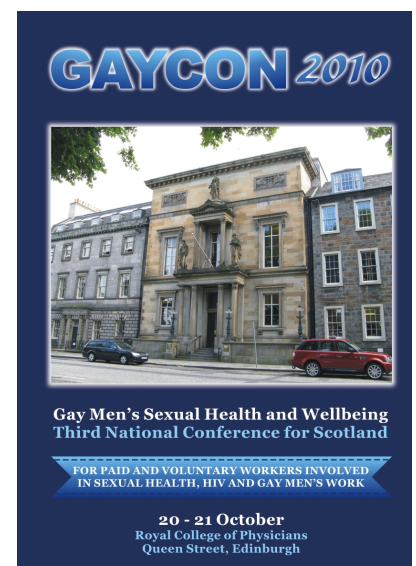
'fetishisation of semen exchange'. Flowers stated, "Arguably the norm for using condoms has eroded and has been replaced by new ideas and sexual scripts celebrating and eroticising unprotected sex and semen exchange"

Day 2 of the conference focused on HIV and on human rights. Peter Tatchell gave an international overview of LGBT oppression and argued that HIV is, and always has been a human rights issue claiming that homophobia is a significant barrier to combating HIV transmission amongst gay and bisexual men.

The international human rights theme was developed in presentations on Waverley Care's work in Malawi and a preview screening of the film "Suddenly Last Winter" that documents a wave of homophobia in Italy following a government proposal to give rights to unmarried and gay couples. The closing session featured a panel discussion on human rights and was addressed by Patrick Harvie, MSP.

Other topics covered at the Conference included criminalisation of HIV transmission, HIV stigma, working with young men, group work with older gay men and use of social marketing in HIV prevention. The conference also included interactive sessions on working in rural areas, service engagement, use of drama in sexual health promotion and the NHS QIS Draft HIV clinical standards.

The conference reports are now available to download at www.gaycon.org and provide a comprehensive resource for anyone working in the field of HIV prevention and sexual health promotion with gay and bisexual men.



PREVENTION PROGRAMMES FOR HIV POSITIVE PEOPLE: LINK SCOTLAND



Link Scotland is a multi-agency initiative, led by GMH, set up to plan and deliver a national programme of work with gay and bisexual men living with HIV in Scotland. Link Scotland seeks to reduce HIV transmissions by working them through various interventions including skills building workshops and reflective, facilitated residential weekends.

Link Scotland believes that health promotion work with HIV positive gay and bisexual men covers all aspects of health including mental health, sexual health and broader determinants of holistic health. This work is based on the realities, experiences and perspectives of gay and bisexual men living with HIV. Workshops and training events to date have included sessions on Healthy Eating and Exercise, Safer Sex and HIV and Employment.

Police Surgery

Since September 2009 Gay Men's Health in Glasgow has held a 'Police Surgery' on the last Wednesday of every month. Not only does this allow the LGBT community to report incidents to the police but since the surgery falls on the same night as volunteer induction sessions, it also allows officers to speak to the new volunteers about third party reporting and the relationship the police have with the community.



Community Development

The concept of peer education is absolutely central to the way we work at Gay Men's Health. It is a highly effective form of information sharing whereby people with shared experiences and similar outlooks on life can assist one another in taking control of issues that affect them. We firmly believe that the best placed people to inform gay and bisexual men are gay and bisexual men themselves.

With this in mind, we train gay and bisexual male volunteers to talk with their peers about a wide range of issues. These can include active promotion of regular STI / HIV testing, community consultation on new campaigns and developing areas of work, correct condom use and hepatitis A and B vaccinations.

We also ensure that outreach work is co-ordinated to complement the work of partner agencies. A good example of this is our online peer education work, which is carried out under an umbrella of six organisations called the Scottish Netreach Network (SNN). GMH continues to play a key role within this Network.

Targeted peer education work with young gay men involves new media and the use of social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Recon, Fitlads, LadsLads, Slaveboys and podcast development work on information videos for upload onto Youtube and iTunes.



Peer Education

Peer education is most successful when it takes place in areas where large numbers of gay and bisexual men come together to meet. To this end our trained volunteers currently work in gay bars, clubs, on gay internet sites such as Gaydar and Grindr and in the active promotion of the community-based testing in saunas.

Peer educators were key in developing an outreach approach based on the principles of motivational interviewing. Experienced outreach volunteers now use this approach on the commercial gay scene. Having established a good rapport with the men they meet, they will ask a set of specific questions or deliver specific goal focused statements. The aim here is to create a well-informed community norm, with the intention of volunteers presenting their peers with an issue for deliberation or an opportunity to examine their own thoughts, knowledge, behaviours and attitudes (sometimes referred to as an “internal critique”). Specifically we have used this technique to encourage men to think about their own safer sex practice and testing behaviour.



Volunteer Hours

Peer education volunteers in both Glasgow and Edinburgh have spent 975 hours in gay scene venues to promote sexual health screening for HIV and other STIs. Peer educators continue to be conscientious and enthusiastic in their work, all having participated in face-to-face training sessions to develop their skills in approachability, motivational interview techniques and dealing with conflict.

total volunteer hours for
2010/11

8,290



Within Glasgow saunas, 174 hours of peer education, resulted in 218 interactions being made. Main points raised and discussed involved promotion of six-monthly HIV and STI testing, opportunities for on-site testing within sauna, HIV prevalence, risk behaviour and involvement within GMH. There has been good support for GMH peer work and the development of the community based sexual health testing service.

Volunteers provided 478 hours of internet outreach work resulting in high quality in-depth interactions, most being from the Lothian and Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area. Issues discussed were mostly in relation to six-monthly sexual health screening and sexual health services within Edinburgh and Glasgow. Interactions involved deeper discussions of HIV testing, risk and transmission.

Two young men's new media volunteers were recruited in Glasgow and information sequences from recent Podcasts were uploaded as shorter and more accessible resources on to Youtube and iTunes. 102 hours were spent by volunteers working on new media within this period. Uploading shorter sequences was based on feedback on the original format of Podcasts suggesting the reduction of each podcast to one or two minutes and to repackage most of the original pieces into shorter, attractive "... more click-able" and venue-friendly segments.

Our dedicated volunteers have given their time in many other roles including counselling and group facilitation 1756 hours, office support 959 hours, condom deliveries 743 hours, and events 852 hours. We recognise and value the hard work and support they continue to show us.



Young Men's Work

Since November 2009, Gay Men's Health in Glasgow has been funded to undertake work with young gay and bisexual men. Two workers have been employed, one covering Internet & New Media work, the other concentrating on work with students in Higher & Further Education establishments.

Internet & New Media

Internet and new media work has focused on on several key websites which are frequented by young gay and bisexual men such as, Facebook, Twitter, Ladslads, Fitlads and Slaveboys as well as other smaller websites.

The methods employed on these websites vary although they include user profiles set as GMH, blogging, participating on discussion forums and posting GMH videos.

A considerable amount of time has also been spent developing working relationships with the operators of these websites to enable us to deliver the work consistently and without issue or conflict.

Higher & Further Education (H&FE)

Links have been forged with existing LGBT societies in the NSH GGC area and condoms and lubricant are regularly supplied to the groups along with printed resources. We have also been in talks with the City of Glasgow College to assist them in setting up an LGBT society. Furthermore where student societies do not exist we endeavour to work with elected student officers, who have a welfare remit or an LGBT representative remit to distribute condoms and resources appropriately in their academic institution. Due to the elected nature of these posts it is an area of continually ongoing work to maintain links at each of the institutions.

The first of the printed resources aimed at young gay and bisexual men "Inside info" has been produced and distributed amongst all student LGBT societies in the NHSGGC area and agreements with colleges about carrying the resources at freshers fayres and health fairs have been reached, ensuring the resource reaches the target group regardless of which academic institution they are attending.

Furthermore the HFE worker has coordinated a group of peer educators under the "befriending" scheme who are present at large scale events hosted by the colleges and universities to carry out GMH peer education work. In addition to this the HFE worker gives presentations upon request to LGBT student societies focussing on safer sex, where to source condoms and also supporting the GMH PEP campaign to ensure men at college and university who may not be active on the commercial gay scene but arrange sex through websites or at society gatherings are aware of the principles of safer sex and the availability of PEP.

4926 condoms, 750 sachets of lubricant and 225 bottles of lubricant were delivered.

Over 60% of the material distributed was directly as the result of contacts made by the H&FE worker during the period of this report.



Resources

In Edinburgh, GMH resource volunteers played a significant part in supporting the HIV Comeback Tour with particular emphasis upon distributing and maintaining the campaign presence throughout the commercial gay scene. Additional resources produced in Edinburgh included a new condom resource and reprint of volunteer recruitment.

In Glasgow a range of different resources were produced. These included, publicity material for the Prime Time Group, a series of three resources promoting HIV testing, a reprint of the GHM Sexual Health MOT resource, and a flyer promoting the BME Spectrum initiative.

In addition resources were produced to promote the GMH counselling services in both Edinburgh and Glasgow.

A significant amount of resource work was also committed towards the completion and launch of the PEP campaign in November at Gay Con.



GM8 Magazine

GM8, our sexual health focused community magazine, is written, designed and distributed by GMH volunteers.

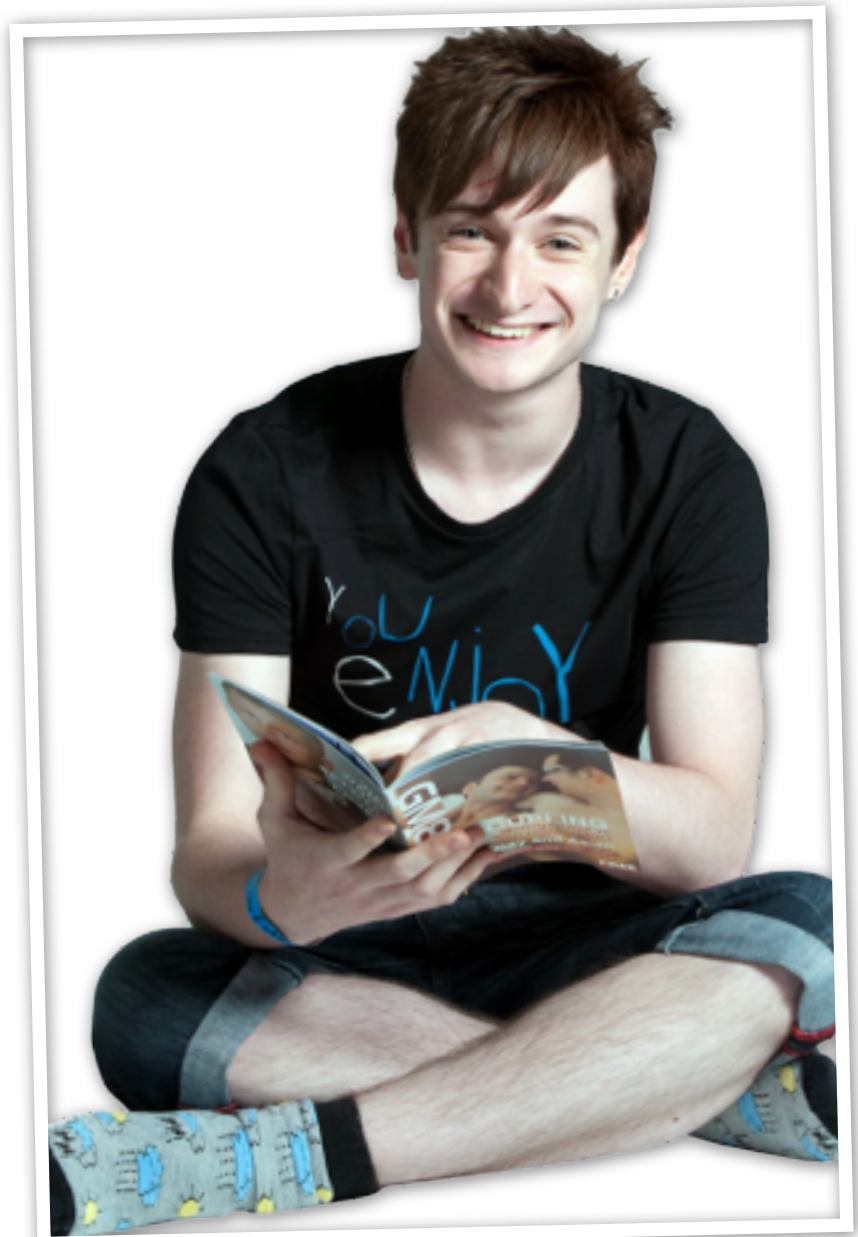
The magazine aims to promote good sexual health amongst gay and bisexual men in an informative and engaging way. This is done by working closely with our volunteering team here at GMH and other community and partner organisations. This allows GMH to produce a resource that is representative of the gay community.

GM8 takes particular pride in the fact that many of our models come from the many diverse members of our community. Whether that be young or old, black or white, fat or thin, our models are the community that we want to appeal to.

During 2010/11, 3 editions of GM8 were published with a minimum circulation of 4,000 per edition, these editions are then distributed to the venues used by gay and bisexual men in both cities.

A further 1,500 hits were made on the GM8 website which contains all the editions of the magazine. There were 2 general editions and a special issue dedicated to the PEP campaign which as launched at Gaycon 2010.

The content of the articles included information on the results of the 2008 MRC Gay Men's Survey, Mephedrone, Reporting Hate Crime, Staying Safe While Cruising, Circumcision, Male Rape, Self Harm, and Erectile Dysfunction. Each edition is complemented by our regular problem pages, our scene guide and maps which highlight where gay and bisexual men can access condoms and lube, as well as the locations of the HIV and STI testing centres in Edinburgh and Glasgow.



Condoms and Lube.

The distribution of condoms and lube continues to be one of the most important services provided by Gay Men's Health. Volunteers distribute materials to bars, clubs and saunas in Glasgow and bars and clubs in Edinburgh.

There are a number of strong arguments to suggest that free condom and lubricant distribution is one of the most effective HIV prevention initiatives available.

Unity/Disunity balance: For each sexual encounter the decision to have, or not have, safer sex will be the result of a mental balancing up between the perceived utility of having safer sex (e.g. avoiding infection) and the perceived disutility (e.g. it feels less intimate). The more effort safer sex is, the more the balance will be weighted towards disutility, and the more unsafe sex is likely to occur. Free, easily accessible condoms greatly reduce the effort involved in having safer sex, and so significantly shift the balance back.

Having condoms very visibly available at those venues where sexual contacts are likely to be made can be a powerful reminder to those men who are lapsing in their decisions to always have safer sex.

Providing free condoms in community settings helps to reinforce the idea that safer sex is an expected behaviour.

Providing free condoms and lubricant along with relevant information increases condom knowledge and reduces condom failure.

In both cities the main way of providing materials is via a system of bar-jars and condom dispensers containing loose condoms and sachets of lubricant. This enables men to choose the correct amount of lubricant they need while reducing the waste associated with condom packs, such as unused materials and packaging. Condom packs, containing two condoms and two sachets of lubricant, as well as relevant sexual health information, are used for outreach work and during events, such as Pride.

In the last year GMH volunteers have distributed 317,000 condoms, 276,000 sachets of lube and 2900 bottles of lubricant to our partner venues in Glasgow; and 160,488 condoms and 93,946 sachets of lube in Edinburgh. GMH are very proud of the role that our volunteers play in providing over 9117 condoms and 7114 sachets of lubricant each week to gay men in Glasgow and Edinburgh.



Over 9117 condoms and 7114 sachets of lubricant distributed in Glasgow & Edinburgh each week

PEP Campaign

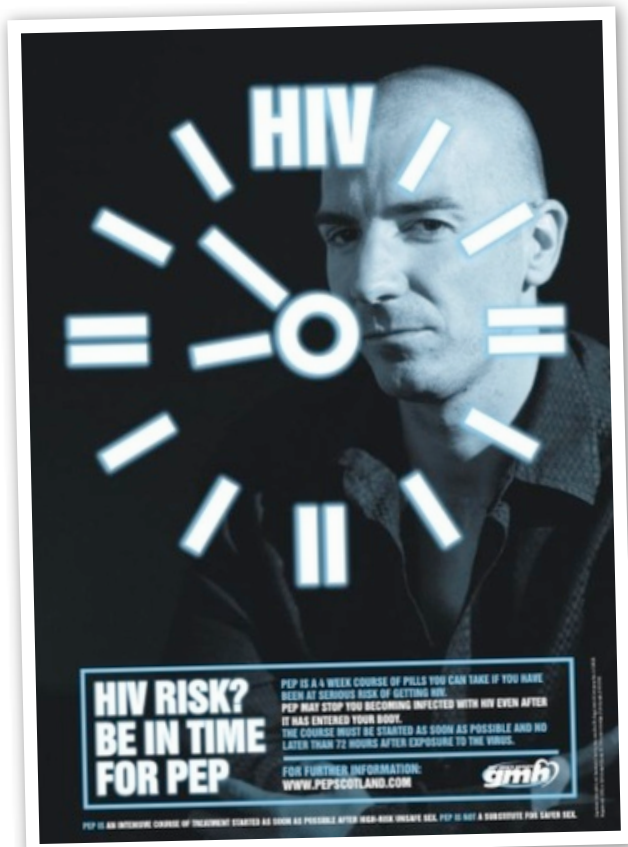
In October 2010 GMH launched a national campaign in Scotland aimed at raising awareness among gay and bisexual men of issues around PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) in the context of sexual exposure to HIV. This was the first campaign of its kind in Scotland. Prior to the launch of the campaign, GMH carried out extensive consultation with health boards and partner organisations in the voluntary sector across Scotland.

A series of campaign resources were produced including posters, postcards, z-card information leaflets, a special edition of GM8 magazine and a dedicated website (pepscotland.com). The campaign also used peer-to-peer work to engage with men about

PEP and utilised new media and social networking opportunities to further raise awareness of what PEP is and how to access it.

Prior to the launch of the campaign in September 2010, GMH undertook a baseline study to ascertain levels of knowledge about PEP amongst gay and bisexual men using the commercial gay scene in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

A total of 559 men were interviewed, levels of basic awareness of what PEP is were very low, a high percentage thought PEP was a cure for HIV and very few knew where to access PEP indicating a clear case for an information campaign. GMH published a report on the initial survey in December 2010.



gmh.org.uk Website

The GMH web site has over 150 pages, most of which sits within the “Useful Information” section, which offers a broad range of helpful resources for gay and bisexual men. This includes sections on HIV and Testing, Condoms, and Relationships.

The most popular area of the site is “The Good Gay Sex Guide”! This gives information on how to make sex more enjoyable, whilst giving clear information on how to minimise risks.

The website also gives details about Gay Men’s Health, its history and ethos, how to contact staff, apply to become a volunteer, set up a counselling session and even ask questions anonymously about subjects such as gay sex and sexual health.

The site takes advantage of popular social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook, allowing users to share interesting content easily with their friends. During the year, our facebook friends and followers on twitter have doubled in number. Gay Men’s Health also has a strong presence on the most popular social networking sites themselves, allowing users to keep up to date with what’s going on at GMH and usefully interact with us.

This year the site has had over 33,000 visitors, with over 87,000 page views. Whilst Edinburgh and Glasgow were the two most popular locations from which our site was viewed, we really have been visited from (and we hope, provided help to) gay and bisexual men all over the world.

A satellite site was set up to complement the PEP campaign.



60,000 Website visitors
and 170,000 page views



Counselling

Gay Men's Health offers a professional, confidential counselling service for gay and bisexual men in both Lothian and Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The service is free or by donation. The Lothian service has been established for over ten years, and the GGC service became operational two years ago after the award of funding from the Janek Latosinski Trust. The GGC service was initially for men living with HIV and their partners, but this has now been broadened out to all gay and bisexual men, thanks to donations received.

Short and long-term individual and couple counselling is provided by an expanded team of 18 counsellors (12 in Lothian and 6 in GGC) all of whom are either Diploma qualified or students on a Diploma Course. Many of our counsellors have been with the organisation for several years and they all bring a wealth of mental health, counselling and life experience to the counselling work. They see a minimum of 2 clients per week, and are provided with professional supervision both individual and in groups. Gay Men's Health is an organisational member of British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and adheres to its 'Ethical Framework for Good Practice'.

Clients approach our counselling services with many and varied issues, - anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, sexuality, sexual risk taking, recent diagnosis or living with HIV, addictions, bereavement, relationships, abuse.

All clients self refer, many come to us through the website or information from the gay scene, and others are recommended to contact GMH by their GPs, or other NHS services such as the GUM clinic, ROAM in Edinburgh and the Brownlee Centre in Glasgow. Clients are seen 7-10 days after contacting the service for an initial appointment, this has proved an invaluable first step in the process and means that if men have to wait for regular counselling they have been seen and familiarised themselves with GMH, and can if necessary be signposted to practical help. It may also be appropriate for them to be given information about our Together or Prime Time groups or a volunteer application pack.

Service evaluation is an essential part of running and maintaining a professional counselling service. Gay Men's Health uses the CORE (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation) system. This is widely used in the NHS and other counselling services, and is an invaluable tool for assessing risk to clients, and to measure the impact counselling has on their psychological distress. This system also provides us with information regarding who (age/ethnicity) is accessing the service and how they hear about us. This allows us to develop ideas for further and more extensive promotion of the service.

During this year Gay Men's Health delivered 1800 counselling sessions and carried out initial appointments for 72 new clients.



Financial Report Figures

	Apr 2009 – Mar 2010	Apr 2010 – Mar 2011
INCOME	£445,000	£451,000
Lothian NHS	48%	49%
Greater Glasgow &	43%	45%
Grants	7%	4%
Miscellaneous	2%	2%
EXPENDITURE	£467,000	£429,000
Staff Costs	58%	65%
Office Costs	23%	20%
Other staff/ Volunteer	5%	6%
Educational	9%	6%
Professional	2%	1%
Depreciation	3%	2%
Carried Over/ (deficit)	-£22,000	£22,000



gmh.org.uk

Address for correspondence:

10 UNION STREET, EDINBURGH EH1 3LU

T: 0131 558 9444 E: mail@gmh.org.uk

**Unit 9, The Adelphi Centre, 12 Commercial Rd,
Glasgow, G5 0PQ**

T: 0141 552 0112 E: glasgow@gmh.org.uk

SCOTTISH CHARITY NO. SCO23479, REGISTERED COMPANY NO. 156826
REGISTERED OFFICE - EDINBURGH QUAY, 133 FOUNTAINBRIDGE, EDINBURGH EH3 9AG