It is with sadness and gratitude that CDHN say a fond farewell to the longstanding Manager of the Building the Community-Pharmacy Partnership Programme, Sharon Bleakley.

From the outset BCPP has been a unique way to promote the principles of Community Development and utilise the skills, knowledge, expertise and assets of Pharmacists and Communities. Under Sharon’s direction a wealth of training tools and resources have been developed to support and complement the work. These are available for CDHN members and pharmacists on our website.

Sharon has been the recipient of many awards for her work in CDHN. The Chemist & Druggist Award in 2009 was the first of many accolades received and this culminated in the Pharmacy in Focus Award for “Outstanding Contribution to Pharmacy” (January 2015). Her mentor and advocate Dr Norman Morrow (retired Chief Pharmaceutical Officer) was a guiding light to her throughout a career that provided many challenges and rewards over the years.

The support and guidance she has given to BCPP Projects has been very much appreciated, earning her respect and affection among them.

Everyone in CDHN, The Board of Management, the BCPP Steering Group along with our members, especially those involved in a BCPP Project, wish her a fond farewell and continued success in her future ventures.
Earlier this year Gordon Pollock of Pollock's Chemist won the Pharmacist of the Year Award for his dedication and commitment to the pharmacy profession and its development – a worthy winner. Gordon started his pharmacy from scratch in East Belfast in 1984, placing him right at the heart of that community. Gordon has always gone the extra mile, having built up a great relationship and trust with local people. He offers a wide range of services extending to minor ailments, smoking cessation, repeat dispensing, blood pressure monitoring and medicines use review.

In more recent years, BCPP has added to Gordon and his staff's ability to contribute to the wellbeing of the local community. In the first instance Gordon linked in with the Island Centre and more recently has had the opportunity to develop a partnership with NIAMH (NI Association for Mental Health) on the Newtownards Road. NIAMH is the largest and longest established independent charity focusing on mental health and wellbeing services in Northern Ireland. One aspect of their service is the Beacon programme which provides support services to people with experience of mental illness through supported housing, day support and advocacy services.

With NIAMH, the initial stages of the BCPP Project involved building up rapport and trust with participants using the day centre. Gordon then went on to work with a group to explore issues such as what a pharmacist does and what services they can offer and sessions on understanding cardiovascular and psychological medicines.

1-1 support offered covered topics like bowel health, interaction between Over the Counter and Prescription medication, Alcohol use and physical health.
They also covered topics like over the counter medicines, medicine interactions, food and drink, alcohol use and illegal drugs. A fantastic part of the project was being able to offer people time out on a 1-1 confidential basis and also working with the whole group using creative and participative approaches.

From then he worked with the group and NIAMH to design a ‘Wellbeing in Action Toolkit’ to support self-help coping strategies by linking physical and mental health. Gordon and the group also had the opportunity to work with a range of other providers that included a dentist, a dietician, FASA (drug and alcohol use) as well as linking with activities like Pilates.

The participants discussed their issues in depth and their response showed an enthusiasm to interact with other health professionals as well as pharmacists. The staff at NIAMH could not have been more pleasant and professional.”

NIAMH Beacon Manager Emma Bailie with Pharmacist Gordon Pollock, at the launch of their Wellness Recovery Toolkit that was developed with the BCPP Participants.

Emma Bailie, former NIAMH Manager -

“The most positive aspect of the project was the determination of our service users in relation to taking action for their own well-being and offering peer support. Many of our service users are seeking more help from each other, speaking out and actively participating in groups which previously may not have been so frequent.”

NIAMH and Gordon also organised some wider events to promote women’s and men’s health issues and have made the Toolkit available to the wider NIAMH Beacon Centre Network.

Gordon said “This project has been challenging but rewarding as I feel that we have been able to involve ourselves in a much higher level within our community than I could have previously hoped for.
OASIS Caring in Action does exactly what it says on the tin! They provide support and services to people in the area who have experienced some kind of trauma. Redundancy, chronic illness, mental health and wellbeing, issues with addiction or relationship breakdown, loneliness and isolation, anger management, homelessness and financial worries to name but a few. This Organisation cut its teeth as Patchwork Ireland and has recently joined with OASIS, a larger Organisation, and is situated in Coleraine town centre.

There is a drop in service at “The Haven” which takes place on Tuesdays and Fridays. Building on this, the Level 2 Project with the Pharmacist Charlie McMullan of Clear Pharmacy Coleraine, focused on improving the health of the group and addressed issues that affect their lives. Charlie who hails from Scotland had heard of the BCPP Programme and as his boss was keen to get out into the community, he phoned Olivia and started the ball rolling.

The Programme is successful because it is based on trust. Charlie has a great attitude and he dresses casually so is seen as accessible to clients. It works because people are prepared to accept challenges and make choices that will ultimately be good for them.

A powerful partnership has grown between Charlie and Olivia as they share a genuine rapport and harmonise their input for the benefit of the group as a whole. Charlie is available to speak to on a one to one basis and this private contact enhances and builds on the trust. There was a tremendous level of support offered through use of the one to ones. Information sessions are wide-ranging and working in partnership with other providers has enriched Charlie’s knowledge of what is available in the area.

He is now in a position to signpost people onto other support locally. Oasis has noticed a change in five of their clients in particular who have received support from Charlie, from Women’s Aid and from Debt NI.
The emphasis is on working alongside people through a system of referrals from various sources: The GP, self-referrals, church referrals and by word of mouth too. It was immediately obvious that this was a way to address supporting those with mental health issues. They offer support in a safe environment and opportunities to build confidence.

One small and delightful way to introduce choice was the use of a new venue for one of the lunch sessions and having a menu of new dishes to choose from where participants enjoyed eating a meal together instead of the lonely meal they are used to as most clients live by themselves.
Right on the North coast a group of over 30 older people, supported through Bushmills and District Community Association, got together with their local pharmacist to design a programme around their health and wider wellbeing needs. Not only were there information sessions, but walks and talks, memory café events and practical sessions on basic first aid. They also used aerobics, arts and crafts and even archery, music and reminiscence as a way of supporting the learning and putting advice into practice. Learning was shared with the wider community through a joint newsletter.

In addition they have built links with a range of other organisations such as Alzheimer’s Society and COAST. One of the benefits has been how the organisation has developed as a result of the project and increased in numbers. Involvement and confidence has increased and also confidence and skills in being able to handle funding and how to record progress. In fact, they were able to approach their local Council to secure funding to put in place an outdoor gym in the local community!

Pharmacist Kathryn Kane from Gordon’s Chemist said, “Patients seem more willing to approach me in the pharmacy and quite a few now regularly ask me for advice. I have gained a far greater understanding of the needs of the local community and learned it is not always necessary to use medical approaches in treatment and sometimes emotional support is all that is needed.”
Congratulations to Anderson’s Pharmacy in Portadown who won the GP Partnership of the Year Award and Bannside Pharmacy, Portglenone who won Public Health Initiative of the Year at the Chemist and Druggist UK Awards. Both Pharmacist Raymond Anderson and Eoghan O’Brien have been involved with BCPP for many years. Well done to all involved for their innovative thinking and hard work that led to them winning these awards.

Pharmacist Raymond Anderson at the C&D Awards

Pharmacist Eoghan O’Brien receives his award

CDHN were delighted to meet two pharmacists from Nigeria, Ete Grant and Folasade Olufunke Lawal, as part of their study visit to Northern Ireland and to be able to share the learning and impact of BCPP with them. Breakthru Dungannon, along with Boots, facilitated an afternoon visit for CDHN. They told us about the work they have carried out with local women, older people, a men’s shed and a local day care support service. The afternoon was a great success and it was humbling to hear the participants’ stories and see the impact and value gained from being a part of BCPP.

Thanks to Dr Norman Morrow for including us as part of the visit and a huge thank you to Breakthru and Boots for all the effort they put in to making the day such a great success.

Sharing the learning and impact of BCPP at Breakthru, Dungannon
Funding now available!

**Level 1 funding** is for those interested in exploring ideas and needs through a community-pharmacy partnership. It consists of a maximum of £2,000 for a project lasting approximately 6 months.

The upcoming closing date for Level 1 funding is:

- **Thursday 11th February 2016 at 4 pm**

Funding now available!

**Level 2 funding** is for those who have planned to work in partnership and are clear about what their project wants to achieve.

It consists of a maximum of £10,000 for a project that lasts approximately 1 year.

**Level 3 funding** is for those who have completed several Level 2 projects. It consists of £10,000 for 3 years (£30,000 in total).

The upcoming closing dates for Level 2 and Level 3 funding are:

- **Thursday 19th November 2015 at 4pm**
- **Thursday 14th April 2016 at 4pm**

New application form out now

This programme is funded by:

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