25 March 2014

PUBLICATION OF “PROGRESS AND PRIORITIES: ADDENDUM TO THE SEXUAL HEALTH PROMOTION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN”

Sexual health and wellbeing are important public health issues. The “Progress and Priorities” Addendum updates and extends the lifespan of the Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and Action Plan (2008-2013) to improve, protect and promote sexual health and wellbeing within the population of Northern Ireland. It includes a revised Action Plan up to the end of December 2015.

There has been a lot of excellent work in support of the 2008-13 Strategy’s aims. I am particularly encouraged to see the increasing percentage of young people delaying sexual activity and the significant reduction in the rates of births to teenage mothers here.

Changes in lifestyles, service developments, and evidence of best practice mean that we have to review and revise, as necessary, our strategic approach to promoting better sexual health.

As part of this process, my Department has published the Addendum to the Strategy along with a revised action plan. Many of the Strategy’s 25 actions remain valid for achievement of the Strategy’s aim and objectives. A number of these actions have been enhanced with greater detail; and two new actions have been added.

I extend my thanks to the Sexual Health Improvement Network for its considerable efforts to deliver sexual health improvements and its commitment to further advance this agenda.

The Addendum to the Strategy and revised Action Plan is available online at http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/publications.

EDWIN POOTS MLA