



Health for All Now!
People's Health Movement

IIRD
Institute for International
Health & Development

2nd UK People's Health Assembly

Building a progressive health movement in a time of austerity and social exclusion



10th – 12th April 2014

Queen Margaret University, EDINBURGH



Register Now!

To register please visit:

<http://www.qmu.ac.uk/iird/2nd UK Peoples Health Assembly/registration.cfm>

For general information on the global movement visit:

www.phmovement.org and the UK PHM website: www.phm-uk.org.uk



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Background and Context

The word 'austerity' has recently gained prominence. It is used to describe a wide range of cuts to public spending across services including welfare support, education, health and social care. What is often overlooked is how 'austerity' is a deliberate policy by the government to redistribute resources from the poor to the rich through bailout of banks, corporate tax evasion and private finance initiatives.

Austerity and its' effects are being imposed selectively, unevenly and unfairly across society with devastating impacts on disadvantaged groups pushing them further into poverty, deprivation and poor health. It is also being used to justify a further expansion of privatisation, corporate welfare and excessive profiteering - not least of all in the NHS. Whilst this is happening in various ways and at different speeds in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland, it is a crisis affecting the whole of the UK.

Therefore, the political, economic and ideological underpinnings of austerity need to be questioned and challenged. This is a priority for those working in the health sector, and for those seeking to reverse the trend of widening health inequalities.

Why attend?

- Learn more about the background to austerity measures and their impact on local and global determinants of health, on health and related services and on health inequity in different parts of the UK.
- Learn skills for movement building and activism with community and campaign groups; and strategies for challenging austerity
- Dialogue and Network with organisations and individuals involved in health and social activism.
- Take part in developing a People's Health Manifesto and help build a progressive health movement to challenge austerity and exclusion throughout the UK

How to book a place?

- Early bird Registration fee: £50 for the duration; £30 for students and unwaged. Few grants are available for those unable to support participation.

Come to Edinburgh. Take part and shape the future!!

How can you contribute to the discussions?

We invite expressions of interest from individuals, campaigns and advocacy/community groups to contribute to discussions about the following themes at the assembly. If you would like to share your experience/views, **please send us 150-200 words of what you propose to do under any of these formats: (i) story telling or experience sharing; (ii) analysis; or (iii) developing alternatives/solutions.**

- **Austerity and health**

The policy reforms that are currently being implemented in the name of austerity have obvious implications for health and wellbeing, particularly for communities and individuals already experiencing difficult circumstances. Research is beginning to document some of these impacts but more needs to be done to draw attention to: (i) the ways in which austerity reforms are impacting on people's everyday lives; (ii) existing (historical and international) evidence regarding the likely health impacts of these kinds of reforms; (iii) what people (in communities, front line services, research, advocacy and policy) are doing to resist and counter these impacts. We also want to make space to imagine alternative policy approaches to such reforms.

- **Social exclusion and vulnerabilities**

Social exclusion is a powerful mechanism of marginalisation and disempowerment. Denial of political, social and cultural rights underpins the process of social exclusion, which has the potential to trap excluded individuals and groups in a web of poverty and discrimination. Understanding the various dimensions of social exclusion and their structural causes has been the focus of much research and policy debate. However, attention is needed on the lived experience of individuals and groups who face exclusionary processes, not least for the disproportionate burden of austerity they face that pushes them further into poverty, deprivation and poor health and wellbeing. We are also interested in how these processes have been challenged by excluded groups in specific contexts, with the intention of sharing and expanding these ways of resistance, reflect critically on what we are doing as practitioners and activists, and to strengthen collective action.

- **Environmental justice and Occupational health**

It is becoming increasingly clear that our exposure to diverse and complex chemicals and particles in the environment is affecting our health. This is especially true for communities that are located near to sources of pollution and workers in high risk industries. Health services too often focus on symptoms and lifestyles of individuals, and shy away from challenging the corporate interests that benefit from filling our environments with toxins. From mining to waste management; agriculture to urban air pollution; public services to pharmaceuticals; and electronics to cosmetics, environmental and occupational causes of ill health can be prevented through alliance between communities, environmentalists and trades unions in a people's health movement.