

News release



25 June 2007

RESPONDING TO YOUNG PEOPLE'S NEED

The recent tragic loss of young life through suicide was discussed at the June meeting of the Southern Health and Social Services Council (SHSSC). The SHSSC, which was established to represent the public interest in relation to health and social care services, expressed its condolences to families affected by suicide.

Speaking after the meeting, Mrs Lynne Cairns, Chairperson of the SHSSC, said, "The SHSSC is conscious that this is not just a health matter and that close partnership working between health and education is required to support young people and to help them become resilient adults. However, we do believe that there is a very clear message being given to health and social care providers. Counselling and similar services, if they are to be effective, need to be readily accessible to a vulnerable young person going through a difficult time. Family support is also important in promoting solid parenting skills throughout a child's development and into adulthood. Our thoughts are with the families affected by suicide as well as all the health and education staff working with communities to promote healthy life choices."

Ends

Notes to Editors:

- **The Southern Health and Social Services Council is one of 4 Health and Social Services Councils set up in 1991 to represent the views of patients and users of the health and social services. The Council has a total of 24 members, 40% of whom are nominated by District Councils in the Southern Area. The remainder are appointed by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety – 30% voluntary/community representatives and 30% are nominees with an interest in health and social care.**
- **Health and Social Services Councils have a right to be consulted by Health and Social Services Boards about and plans for development of services, or where significant changes are being considered. Councils play an important part in representing the views of consumers of services to the decision makers, and provide advice and support to patients and service users in relation to complaints procedures.**

If you require any further information please contact :

Mrs Stella Cunningham, Chief Officer. Tel: 028 3834 9900

The Council's website address is: www.shsscouncil.net