

# Programme Aim



‘To improve the health and social wellbeing of rural farmers and farm families in Northern Ireland by increasing local access to health screening services, by providing health related advice and information and to signpost to existing services for further advice or support’.

# Background

- Farmers are busy and often don't have time to think about their health;
- No occupational health service, therefore limited access to health information or screening;
- Farmers are under-users of the health service – time and opportunity are barriers to accessing health care. Other factors include stoicism, poor access and culture of 'getting on with things';
- Late presentation to primary care services, illness may be well advanced – more difficult to address, cost implications;

# Background

- *Mental health problems* associated with isolation, financial worries, increased paperwork, unpredictability of farming - animal health scares, weather. Tendency not to discuss problems;
- *Accidents* – high accident rate among farmers due to involvement with animals, machinery, chemicals and pesticides –9 farm fatalities in 2011-12 (HSENI);
- *Obesity* – increased mechanisation means that farmers not as physically active as their forefathers. Decrease in activity has also precipitated increase risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

# Background

- Three year project (2012-15) funded by DARD and PHA, DARDs Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework 2011-2015 ;
- Addressing rural poverty;
- Access Poverty - Addressing access to health and community services;
- Financial Poverty - Downturn in farm incomes;
- Social exclusion - Due to rural areas;
- Attitudes - Build resilience in farm families;
- ***Programme - extended for another year!***

# Overview

- Partnership approach including a range of stakeholders from community, voluntary, statutory sectors;
- Screening van visits livestock marts and community venues across NI;
- Programme managed by Nurse Coordinator, Band 7, employed and based within NHSCT;
- Co-ordinator assisted by Community Nurses from different Trust areas.

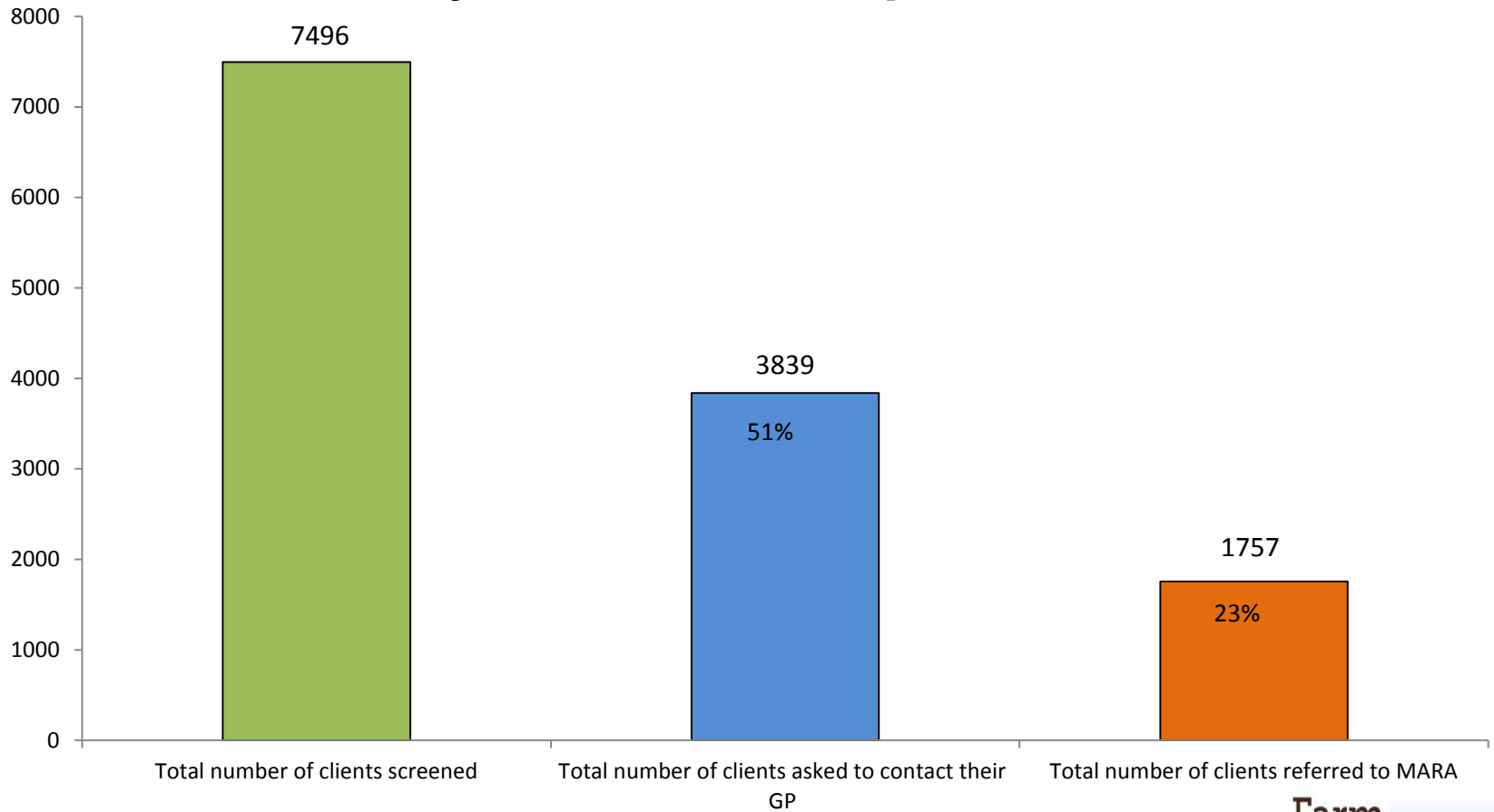
# What's offered?

- Blood Pressure Check
- Cholesterol Check
- Body Mass Index Calculation
- Waist Circumference Measurement
- Diabetic Risk Assessment

# Tailored Lifestyle Advice

- Smoking- Brief Intervention;
- Alcohol – MOT;
- Skin Cancer Prevention;
- Physical Activity;
- Dietary Advice;
- Mental Health/Isolation;
- Referral Pathway to MARA/DARD FarmSafe Course.

# Farm Families Health Checks Programme Screening Stats - July 2012 to April 2015





# Interim Evaluation Report

## Report Recommendations :

- The need to explore opportunities to expand the types of locations visited ensuring access to clients who are hardest to reach;
- More specific targeting and encouragement of reluctant health service users should be encouraged;
- The Farm Families Health Checks Implementation Group could explore other Trust/PHA initiatives as potential signposting/referral options.







Farm  
Families  
Health  
Checks



**FREE HEALTH  
CHECKS**