



## **Pavee Point Travellers' Centre**

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***"I hope the launch of the National Traveller Health Strategy will mean in improvement to Traveller health because it is a document that acknowledges the ethnicity of Travellers and the central role Travellers can play in planning and delivering services,"***

***Missie Collins,  
Traveller Community  
Health Worker.***

# **Traveller Health**

**Traveller health is significantly worse than the health of those in the settled community. As Travellers are a distinct cultural group they have distinctive health needs and require special consideration in the health service.**

The most recent data, a 1987 Health Research Board study shows:

- The Infant Mortality rates for Travellers was 18.1/1000 live births compared to a national figure of 7.4.
- At birth, male Travellers can expect to live 9.9 years less than settled men.
- At birth female Travellers can expect to live 11.9 years less.
- Male Travellers have over twice the risk of dying in a given year than settled males. For female Travellers the risk is more than 3 times.
- The SIDS rate among Traveller families in 2002 was more than 3,5 times the national figure (2.2 vs 0.6 per 1000 live births), ISIDA 2002. Based on estimate of the total number of live births among Traveller families in 1995 (n=454)

## **National Traveller Health Strategy**

In 2002, the National Traveller Health Strategy (NTHS) was launched with a budget of 9 million for its implementation 2002-2005. This Strategy acknowledges the factors influencing Traveller Health:

### *Living Conditions*

The poor conditions in which many Travellers live is an important factor. The NTHS states one in four Travellers has no piped water or electricity.

### *Racism and Discrimination*

According to the NTHS, 17% of Travellers have difficulty in registering with a GP and in many areas it was found that only a small number of GPs provided services to Travellers.

### *Health Promotion*

Lack of education and training materials that are relevant and meaningful to Travellers has contributed to a low uptake of health services by Travellers.

## **Traveller Health Infrastructure**

A Traveller Health Policy Unit now exists at Departmental level along with the National Traveller Health Advisory Committee. At a regional level Traveller Health Units now operate and Primary Health Care for Traveller Projects exist at a local level.

## **New Study on Traveller Health**

As part of the NTHS an All Ireland Traveller Health Status and Needs Assessment Study will commence in 2004.

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