Chemicals Programme

- Skin (Dermal Risks)
- Carcinogens
- Asbestos (DTM)
- Respirable Risks
- Asthma
- Communications & Education
Chemical Programme

- Programme Managers Appointed for skin, asbestos and carcinogens
- Core Groups set up
- Community of Practice & Interest set up
- Terms of reference determined
Common Themes

Emerging

- Need to establish sound evidence base
- Existing work needs mapping
- Robust success criteria essential
- Effective engagement with external stakeholders crucial
- Research in priority areas needs better coordination and focussing
Skin Programme – ill

Health Data

- Existing sources include EPIDERM, OPRA & SWI
- Prevalence figures (2001/2) show 39,000 cases
- Incidence figures show 2,700 – 3,400 new cases each year
- 80% contact dermatitis
- Other data suggests real figures significantly more
High Risk Groups

- Hairdressers
- Beauticians and associated occupations
- Printers
- Metal workers
- Florists
High Risk Substances

- Rubber chemicals/materials
- Soaps/cleaners
- Wet work
- PPE
- Nickel
Targets

- Ill health targets generally not appropriate
- Small scale evaluations more practical
- Proxy targets more useful
Approach

- Mapping revealed large number of existing and planned projects
- Core Group applied selection criteria
- Smaller number of key projects selected/prepared
- Draft strategy/plan revised after 12 months based on:
  - better intelligence
  - stakeholder involvement
  - research outcomes
Asbestos

- Over 3,500 people dying each year from asbestos
- Current exposure levels much lower than 1960s/70s
- Building/Maintenance workers group most at risk
- Duty to manage will save 4,700 lives (commercial premises)
Duty to manage campaign

- 5 year campaign to raise awareness/promote compliance:
  - production of Briefing Pack
  - establishment of Partnership Network
  - web based initiatives
  - cooperative projects with stakeholders e.g. FSB, TUC
  - Local Authority Sector initiative
  - site visit programme by FOD/EHOs
  - education sector initiative
Other Carcinogens

- 4% of all cancers caused by work
- Approximately 6,000 deaths annually (range 3,000-12,000)
- Most of these are chemical carcinogens
- Multi causal nature of cancer creates attribution difficulty
- Long latency period prevents accurate evaluation
Approach

- Mapping exercise for existing /planned projects
- Short term projects in known priority areas, e.g.
  - hexavalent chrome in electro plating
  - PAHs
  - diesel fumes
- Workshop of experts on current/future occupational cancer burdens
- Review of exposure patterns across key industries/substances
- Modification of draft strategy in 18 months