



E-Male Matters

Christmas 2023

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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News

Men's Health Week 2024 - Get the Date into your New Diary!

Believe it or not, it's that time again. Yes, it's time to get the most important date of the year into your new 2024 diary ... [International Men's Health Week](#) (MHW) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. This coming year, it will run from **Monday 10th until Sunday 16th June 2024**.

Every year, the [Men's Health Forum in Ireland](#) (MHFI) convenes an all-island Planning Group for MHW. This group held its first meeting for 2024 on Monday 18th December, and already a theme for the week is developing. Would you be interested in being a part of this process, and joining with others from across the island of Ireland to help to shape MHW 2024? This can be done in many ways - from participating in meetings, to occasional electronic communication. All input is very welcome, and helps to make the week stronger and more relevant.

If you would be interested in being part of the planning process for 2024 (in any way), email Colin Fowler at: colin@mhfi.org

However, even if this is not possible, why not put the dates of MHW 2024 into your new diary, and start thinking about how your group / workplace / church / community / sports club ... could do something to mark this week? It's never too early to start planning.

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Support over the Christmas Period

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from everyone in the Men's Health Forum in Ireland! However, we also know that the holidays can often be a stressful and worrying time for many people. Therefore, please remember that if you - or anyone you know - needs help and support over the Christmas period, you can always contact ...

- The Samaritans (all Ireland) - Freephone 116 123
- Pieta House (RoI) - Freephone 1800 247 247
- Lifeline (NI) - Freephone 0808 808 8000

or visit: <https://www2.hse.ie/mental-health> | <https://www.mindingyourhead.info>

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Men Making a Difference

To celebrate [International Men's Day](#) 2023, HSE Health and Wellbeing - in partnership with the Men's Health Forum in Ireland, the Men's Development Network and the National Centre for Men's Health in SETU - organised a webinar on the theme of 'Men Making a Difference'. At this event (on Thursday 16th November 2023), a wide range of men from across the island of Ireland (John Wall, Noel Richardson, Eoin Kernan, Laurence Gaughan, Steven O'Connell and Kevin Duggan) spoke about their passion for men's health and wellbeing, and the range of interventions and issues that they are involved in. You can see a recording of this inspirational discussion at: <https://youtu.be/728xivevYXM>

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Check-In on Those Around You

At times, it can be obvious when someone is struggling to cope. But, sometimes, the signs are harder to spot. Have you seen the video that was created by Norwich City Football Club and shared to mark World Mental Health Day 2023? ... If not, you might want to have a look at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tX8TgVR33KM>

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Irish Men's Sheds Association Annual Conference

The Irish Men's Sheds Association held their annual conference in Cavan on the 23rd of November 2023. You can watch the video recording of all the speakers on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7CPU7TomnqNsRfKMSluJ-jZyyAwn92q0>

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Health-Wealth Divide: Leaving No One Behind

Were you able to attend the recent 'Health-Wealth Divide: Leaving No One Behind' conference on the 29th of November 2023? This focused upon addressing health inequalities on the island of Ireland. If not, you might be interested in watching a recording of the proceedings at: <http://tinyurl.com/276hherc>

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Ahead of the Game

'Movember' has partnered with the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) and the Gaelic Players Association (GPA) to roll-out 'Ahead of the Game' - an evidence-based emotional literacy programme designed for delivery in a sports club setting. This initiative will enable young players, their parents and coaches to better understand mental health, build mental fitness, and strengthen resilience to deal with challenges in sport and life through a series of interactive workshops. Find out more at: <http://tinyurl.com/muahzvtx>

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Podcast: One Man's Experience of Head and Neck Cancer

Paul Doran was diagnosed with head and neck cancer. In this podcast, from Belfast Men's Health Group, he talks about his journey from being diagnosed, to his treatment, and through to his recovery. See: <https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-xfk6t-150efaa>

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Promoting Physical Activity for Older People: A Toolkit for Action

Regular physical activity can help older people maintain and improve their mental health and cognitive ability, delay the onset of dementia, and reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. It can also improve other functional abilities, including physical function and balance, thereby preventing falls and fall-related injuries. Being physically active helps to prevent heart disease and cancer, and to prevent and manage chronic conditions such as Type-2 diabetes and hypertension. Just as importantly, physical activity brings social benefits - as being active offers the chance to build relationships and strengthen networks; enabling continued contribution to society. The World Health Organisation has recently produced a 'Toolkit for Action' to help to increase the proportion of older people participating in physical activity. See it at: <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/373332/9789240076648-eng.pdf>

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Having your Prostate Checked: A Guide

The HSE has produced a guide for anyone who is thinking about having their prostate checked. See it at: <http://tinyurl.com/36ndd7tm>

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Training

MANifest: Connecting Men with Mind Fitness

'MANifest: Connecting Men with Mind Fitness' is a workshop which was developed by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland, Western Health and Social Care Trust and Men's Action Network. It evolved in response to the growing demand from service providers in Northern Ireland for support to: improve their engagement with men; increase their knowledge and skills in recognising mental distress in adult men; ensure that men are referred to the most appropriate services to meet their needs. Applications are, currently, being sought from individuals who would be interested in applying for a place on the MANifest Facilitator Training Programme which will take place in February 2024. Find out more at:

<https://www.mhfi.org/MANifestOverview2023.pdf>

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Men's Health and Lifestyle Programme

Are you a man? Would you be interested in taking part in a ten week health and lifestyle programme? ... If so, you might like to join a group in either Dromore, Co. Down (beginning on Thursday 11th January 2024) or Craigavon, Co. Armagh (beginning on Wednesday 17th January 2024) for health checks, weekly physical activity sessions, and support and guidance from dedicated staff to ensure that you get the best from the programme. Sessions begin at 7.00pm each week. For more information, contact Frances Haughey, Health Inequalities Officer, by Email: frances.haughey@armaghbanbridgescraigavon.gov.uk | Tel: 075 0077 2905.

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Healthy Ireland Survey 2023

The Healthy Ireland Survey is conducted annually, with a representative sample of the population aged 15 and older living in the Republic of Ireland. The Survey gives an up-to-date picture of the health of the nation, reporting on many health-related lifestyle behaviours. The 2023 Survey includes data on smoking, alcohol and drug usage rates, mental health, social connectedness and suicide awareness, general health, antibiotic awareness and health service utilisation. Download the report from: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/73c9d-healthy-ireland-survey-2023>

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Mental Health in Northern Ireland: Fundamental Facts

What are the factors affecting mental health and wellbeing in Northern Ireland? ... Accurate information and data is vital - not only to allow us to plan effective mental health services, but also to increase knowledge and understanding about the structural factors and inequalities that influence mental health and wellbeing. This report helps to increase understanding of the nature of the issues, the origins of these difficulties, and the actions that must be taken to improve everyone's lives. Read it at: <http://tinyurl.com/3f5bfzbn>

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Irish National Survey of Sexual Health

Members of the public are being asked to consider helping to advise on the development and implementation of the Irish National Survey of Sexual Health (INISH) - a nationwide, representative study on sexual health in Ireland. By joining one of the Advisory Panels, your insights will contribute to the development of evidence-based policies, programmes and services that are responsive to the diverse needs of local communities. Input from males is particularly welcome. Find out more at: <https://www.mhfi.org/INISH.pdf>

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Men's Health in the UK: Briefing Paper

In mid-December 2023, the United Kingdom Parliament produced a briefing paper which focuses upon men's physical and mental health, and the disparities in health outcomes between men and women. It describes key drivers for these outcomes, as well as policy approaches to improve men's health. A copy of their report can be downloaded at: <https://post.parliament.uk/research-briefings/post-pb-0056>

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Male Suicide and Barriers to Accessing Support: A Qualitative Thematic Analysis

The key findings from this study reveal the multifaceted barriers some men experience regarding a lack of motivation, a lack of psychological capability, and/or a lack of physical/social opportunity to access support. Results suggest that many men have sought support, but had negative experiences, and that many others want help but cannot access it. Barriers include prohibitive costs and waiting times; potential costs to identity, autonomy, relationships and future life opportunities; a lack of perceived psychological capability; a lack of belief in the utility of services; and a mistrust of mental health professionals. Findings suggest the importance of examining the role of gender in male help-seeking behaviours. Read the journal article at: <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s12144-023-05423-1.pdf>

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Mental Health Recovery and Engagement Office Survey

The National Mental Health Recovery and Engagement Office is in the process of scoping out and developing processes on how they can value the voluntary input from service users, family members and carers in the design, development and improvement of Mental Health Services. To help inform this work, you are asked to consider completing their survey at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/N56J6N8>

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Survey on Prostate Partners

A new research project from Europa Uomo will attempt to capture the experiences of those closest to men with prostate cancer, identify the issues affecting them, and set an agenda for action to support them. The study centres upon an online survey for spouses, partners and caregivers, asking simple questions about how their partner's prostate cancer has affected them. The survey is available in 17 languages. You can find out more and access it at:

<http://tinyurl.com/35h767a3>

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The Lived Mental Health Experiences of Traveller Men Affected by Suicide in Ireland

Rates of suicide are seven times higher among Traveller men in Ireland compared with non-Traveller men. Several factors are implicated, including racism, social exclusion, discrimination, inadequate accommodation, unemployment, and lower educational attainment. Systemic and cultural barriers inhibit Traveller men from seeking support. This study addresses a gap in the literature by exploring the lived mental health experiences of Traveller men affected by suicide. Read the article on this in the American Journal of Men's Health:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10493055>

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Web Links

Men's Issues on the Web ...

[Virtual reality gaming promotes men's health](#)

[Grow men's mental health group](#)

[New HSE prostate guide for patients published](#)

[Health policies must consider gender, including men](#)

[Male infertility may be the world's 'canary down a coal mine'](#)

[HSE Talking Health and Wellbeing Podcast: Men's Sheds](#)

[Should fathers be screened for postpartum depression?](#)

[Pressure to prove your manhood may shorten your life](#)

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Next Edition

Do you know of anything (research, events, resources, training, news etc.) affecting men and boys which should be included in the next edition of 'E-Male Matters'? ...

Anyone can propose an article for inclusion in this newsletter - so long as it is of relevance to males, does not promote a commercial enterprise / product, and does not insult anyone.

There's a simple format for all articles. Let us know (within one paragraph and no more than 150 words) all the crucial details e.g. title, date, time, venue, short description, contact details for further information (name, telephone and/or email address), and web link (if available) for a fuller explanation. To keep the file size of this newsletter small, we cannot, unfortunately, accept photographs or images.

Please email your information to: emalematters@mhfi.org

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**E-Male Matters is also available online at:
www.mhfi.org/newsletters/about-e-male-matters.html**

The views expressed in E-Male Matters are not, necessarily, those of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

