

E-Male Matters

September and October 2020

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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News

COVID-19: Keep Up-To-Date with Reliable Information

At the time of producing this newsletter, both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are facing increased COVID-19 restrictions. These are necessary to limit the rapid and widespread transmission of this illness. However, there is a lot of false information being circulated, so it's crucial to follow the official up-to-date guidance from the Health Service Executive in the Republic of Ireland (<https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus>) and the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland (<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus>). Both the [Health Service Executive](#) and the [Public Health Agency](#) now have free smartphone Apps to help us to protect each other and slow the spread of coronavirus. Find out more at: <https://covidtracker.gov.ie> [RoI] | <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/stopcovid-ni-contact-tracing-app> [NI]

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International Men's Day Webinar

[International Men's Day](#) (IMD) takes place on the 19th of November each year. This day offers an opportunity for everyone to celebrate the important contribution that men and boys make to their families, friends, communities, workplaces, society and the world. However, it is also a time to highlight some of the key issues facing males, and to provide practical support and positive encouragement to overcome these.

To mark IMD 2020, HSE Health and Wellbeing - supported by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland and the Centre for Men's Health in IT Carlow - are organising a webinar which explores the impact of COVID-19 upon the health and wellbeing of men and boys. This free event will: begin at 11.00am; look at issues such as farming, older men, young men, men in the GAA; include a mix of presentations and discussion. If you would like to participate, email your details to: colin@mhfi.org

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Free Man Manuals for International Men's Day

International Men's Day (in November each year) is a time to celebrate the important positive contributions that men and boys make to our world, and to highlight the issues that they face. To mark this day, the Men's Health Forum in Ireland is encouraging you to send an e-copy of their '*Challenges and Choices*' Man Manual to all the men that you know. This free, 32 page booklet, poses ten simple and practical health challenges to men and, to meet every challenge, it offers three choices. It can be downloaded at: www.mhfi.org/challenges2020.pdf The publication of this booklet was only possible because of the generous support given by the [Public Health Agency](#) in Northern Ireland, the Health Promotion and Improvement Department within the [Health Service Executive](#) in the Republic of Ireland, and the author - Dr Ian Banks.

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'On Feirm Ground' Programme Launched

The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive, Teagasc and IT Carlow are working together to fund an action research programme that will develop a training programme to support agricultural advisors to engage with farmers around their health and wellbeing. The '*On Feirm Ground*' initiative is part of the [Engage](#) National Men's Health Training Programme. The research and resource development stage of '*On Feirm Ground*' has been ongoing for the past twelve months. On Monday 19th October 2020, a report was launched by Frank Feighan TD (Minister of State with responsibility for Public Health and Wellbeing) and Martin Heydon TD (Minister of State with responsibility for Farm Safety). This outlined the key outcomes of the formative evaluation to inform the design of this bespoke farmers' health training programme. Copies of the Executive Summary report can be downloaded from: www.mhfi.org/OFGexecutive.pdf

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Green Ribbon Campaign

Each year, [See Change](#) roll out a month long Green Ribbon Campaign to encourage people in Ireland to end mental health stigma by getting as many people as possible talking about this issue. This year, the campaign is being run online during October 2020. By wearing a Green Ribbon - the international symbol for mental health awareness - you show that you are committed to influencing positive change. You don't need to be an expert to start talking about mental health or to have all the answers. Sometimes the most helpful thing you can do is to let someone know you are there for them and simply listen. Find out more at:

<https://seechange.ie/green-ribbon>

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How R U Really?

Did you see this innovative initiative by a young man from Northern Ireland which was launched on World Mental Health Day 2020? ... <https://howrureally.com>

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Stand Up for Your Prostate

During September 2020, the [Marie Keating Foundation](https://www.mariekeating.org/) ran a 'Stand Up for Your Prostate' campaign. This sought to open-up a discussion about prostate cancer, and encourage men to seek advice from their GP if they notice any changes in their bodies or when they reach the age of 50 (or 45 with a family history of prostate cancer). Five of Ireland's top comedians (Des Bishop, PJ Gallagher, Danny O'Brien, Gearoid Farrelly and Al Foran) came together to encourage men to 'step up to the mic' when it comes to speaking about their health. You can hear their stories and find out more at:

<https://www.mariekeating.ie/standupforyourprostate2020>

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Cruse Connects

'Cruse Connects' is a project which supports men, aged 30-50, who have been bereaved and live in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area. Some men are not very good at asking for help and support. However, when they do, many find it valuable when coping with their grief. [Cruse](#) has found that this is especially true when they are able to talk with their peers in an all-male group setting. This often leads to realising that they are not alone in how they are feeling. That solidarity can be a real breakthrough moment for many men, and creates a network of like-minded people to connect with. Due to the continuing Covid-19 situation, this group will meet virtually. As well as supporting each other by sharing experiences of what helps and what doesn't, the men can shape how the group will develop when restrictions have been lifted. For further information, contact Eleanor at Tel: 07950 531813 | Email: Eleanor.Ellerslie@cruse.org.uk

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A Useful Guide to Mental and Emotional Wellbeing Resources

The Public Health Agency has produced a flyer called '*A Useful Guide to Mental and Emotional Wellbeing Resources*'. This offers signposting to a range of information, services and support for people who live in Northern Ireland. You can view it at:

www.mindingyourhead.info/sites/default/files/publications/useful_guide_to_mental_and_emotional_wellbeing_resources_pdf.pdf

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Events

Fertility Preservation for Cancer Patients

For people undergoing cancer treatment, the opportunity to preserve fertility can be very important for quality of life in survivorship. This webinar - being run by the [Irish Cancer Society](#) on Friday 6th November 2020 at 1.00pm - will: bring together a panel of people with lived experience, as well as fertility and healthcare experts; discuss the current situation regarding fertility preservation for cancer patients; make recommendations for the future. Everyone is welcome to register for this free event at: <https://bit.ly/353cz5l>

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Talking about Sex and Sexual Behaviour among Young People in Ireland

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) invites you to their webinar on supporting young people's sexual health and wellbeing through evidence and practice. This event will take place on Tuesday 10th November at 1.00pm. It will see the launch of the ESRI / Sexual Health and Crisis Pregnancy Programme / HSE Health and Wellbeing research report on '*Talking about Sex and Sexual Behaviour among Young People in Ireland*' and the related resources that encourage and support parents and children to talk together about relationships, sexuality and growing up. Register your interest at:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=7RMy6btmMk6rlranx0RnpOAPCAJ5DSZAtmg0ztdR0uRUNVAwTTFESzAwSTAxR0l0TkdhREJGV1NWTi4u>

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Training

Online Stress Control Classes

As the HSE can't deliver their Stress Control Classes in the community just now, they are, instead, live-streaming the classes until December 2020. These are free to participate in online, and the next series will commence on Monday 2nd November 2020. Details can be found at: <https://stresscontrol.ie>

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CLOSING SOON: MA in Advanced Facilitation Skills for Promoting Health and Wellbeing

Do you want to become a highly skilled facilitator and advance within your chosen profession or seek new employment opportunities? ... If so, you might consider the Master of Arts in Advanced Facilitation Skills for Promoting Health and Wellbeing. This is an innovative practice-orientated programme; the only one of its kind nationally. It is designed to enhance personal growth and development, and to advance the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies required for effective facilitation of health and wellbeing programmes with groups, individuals and key populations. This is a full time course, and its delivery reflects the flexibility required for adult learners. The programme is delivered in Dublin on one Friday and Saturday per month per semester, and via three residential weekends - dispersed across the three semesters from January 2021. For further information, check out www.wit.ie/wd591 or take a look at this short video https://youtu.be/PS4jHSm_yjs For all queries, please contact the course leaders by email at: PCarroll@wit.ie | MLBarry@wit.ie

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Online Stop Smoking Course

St Vincent's University Hospital invites you to participate in their online Stop Smoking Course. This six week programme will: provide support; help develop skills to stop smoking; provide advice on stop smoking medications. It will take place on Mondays, from 2nd November to 7th December 2020, between 5.30pm and 7.00pm. For more information / to book a place, contact the Department of Preventive Medicine and Health Promotion at Tel: 01 2214958 | Email: smokingservice@svuh.ie

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HIV: Preventing New Transmissions in Ireland

[HIV Ireland](#) invite you to join them for this one hour webinar to increase your knowledge and awareness about HIV in Ireland and learn about the prevention options available to end new acquisitions of HIV. This will take place on Wednesday 4th November 2020, from Noon - 1.00pm. Attendance is free of charge, but registration is essential as numbers are limited. To book a place, visit:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/8016020705523/WN_KbIPXKYCRnecxLmr2p9iWA

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Research

Essential and Vulnerable: Implications of COVID-19 for Farmers in Ireland

This article, in the Journal of Agromedicine, seeks to: provide an overview of the impacts of - and responses to - the spread of COVID-19 in Ireland; assess the vulnerability of the population living in rural areas to COVID-19; compare the health status of male farmers to

underlying medical conditions frequently associated with those experiencing the worst impacts of the illness; and assess the implications of COVID-19 for farmers living alone and farm households with children. You can download a copy of the article at:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1059924X.2020.1814920>

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How People are Coping During the Covid-19 Pandemic

The [Institute of Public Health in Ireland](#) is inviting you to take part in an online, anonymous, international survey to help understand how people are coping during the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey has been developed by the International Loneliness and Social Isolation Research Network that includes the Institute of Public Health along with Ulster University, Trinity College Dublin and Maynooth University, as well as colleagues from the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. The study seeks to learn about the issues people are facing, and how they are managing with social distancing and changes to everyday life - so gaining valuable insights into life before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, including key challenges and coping strategies. If you would be willing to participate in this survey, visit:

<https://bit.ly/36PxDq1>

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Experiences of Having Excess Weight in Today's Society

Have you ever had excess weight? Would you like to share your experiences and opinions? ... Researchers at Queen's University Belfast would like to invite you to complete a questionnaire about your experience of having excess weight, and your opinions on different terms used to describe weight / size. They are looking for men and women who are over 18 years old to complete a questionnaire. To find out more and participate in this study, visit:

https://qubpublichealth.fra1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2nUDx0DJGg8kFKZ

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Intersectional Approaches to Equity in Men's Health and Wellbeing

The recent issue of the [International Journal of Men's Social and Community Health](#) - which was guest edited by Prof Derek Griffith - focuses upon '*Intersectional Approaches to Equity in Men's Health and Wellbeing*'. One of the articles in this issue centres upon middle-aged men and suicide in Ireland (see: <https://ijmsch.com/index.php/IJMSCH/article/view/32>). You can also access all the articles at: <https://ijmsch.com/index.php/IJMSCH/issue/view/6>

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Men and COVID-19: The Aftermath

The COVID-19 pandemic offers a prime example of how what we have come to know as 'men's health' is so much more than the biology of the reproductive system. This journal article, by Prof Alan White, highlights that there are both biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) factors - compounded by socio-economic factors and ethnicity - that impact on what has occurred over the time that this novel coronavirus has been circulating the world. Find out more at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00325481.2020.1823760>

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Institute of Public Health Factsheets

Access to reliable COVID-related health and wellbeing evidence continues to be important in Ireland. The [Institute of Public Health](#) has, therefore, launched a new series of factsheets which provides evidence on key public health topics. The first factsheet focuses on Tobacco and COVID-19 (see: <https://publichealth.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/COVID-19-Tobacco-Factsheet-Updated-September-2020.pdf>), and this will be followed by other topics including maternal health and physical activity.

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Mental Health, Men and Culture: How do Sociocultural Constructions of Masculinities Relate to Men's Mental Health Help-Seeking Behaviour in the WHO European Region?

Men are less likely than women to seek help for mental health issues and are much more likely to die through suicide. This WHO scoping review examined recent evidence published in English and Russian on the role of socially constructed masculinity norms in men's help-seeking behaviour for mental health issues. Download the report at:

<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/332974/9789289055130-eng.pdf>

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Men and COVID-19: A Biopsychosocial Approach to Understanding Sex Differences in Mortality, and Recommendations for Practice and Policy Interventions

Data suggest that more men than women are dying of COVID-19 worldwide, but it is unclear why. A biopsychosocial approach is critical for understanding the disproportionate death rate among men. Biological, psychological, behavioural and social factors may put men at disproportionate risk of death. This paper proposes a stepwise approach to clinical, public health, and policy interventions to reduce COVID-19 associated morbidity and mortality among men. It also reviews what health professionals and policy makers can do, and are doing, to address the unique needs of men. Read more at: www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2020/20_0247.htm

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Web Links

Men's Issues on the Web ...

[Combination of biology and lifestyle increases COVID-19 mortality in men](#)
[Scientists discover three new genetic variants linked to male breast cancer](#)
[Protein delivery to the testes restores male fertility in mice](#)
[Take 5 steps to wellbeing: looking after your mental health during COVID-19](#)
[Vitamin D levels may predict future health risks in older men](#)

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Next Edition

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

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