

# E-Male Matters

**December 2011**

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!  
- from everyone in the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

## News

### **Men's Health Week 2012 - A Date for Your Diary**

You haven't even had your turkey yet, and already someone is talking about next year!!! Indeed, it seems like only yesterday when we were all hyped-up for Men's Health Week 2011, and now the next one is just around the corner ... [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 11<sup>th</sup> until Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2012. It is celebrated in most European countries, as well as in the USA, Australia and a number of other places worldwide. The aims of MHW are to: heighten awareness of preventable health problems for males of all ages; support men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices / activities; encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males. Why not put these dates into your diary, and start thinking about how your group could mark this week? More details about the theme, and how to get involved, will follow in the New Year. After all, we want you to enjoy your Christmas break first.

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### **Booklet on Steps to Deal with Stress**

The Public Health Agency has recently reproduced the '[Steps to Deal with Stress](#)' booklet (developed by the Scottish Government). This resource aims to help individuals to recognise the signs of stress, and offers advice to enable them to help themselves to feel better. Research shows that while feeling stressed is common, talking about it or being able to deal with it remains taboo. The booklet helps people to take small achievable steps to deal with stress - before it escalates into more serious mental health problems such as anxiety and depression. It covers the causes of stress, coping with difficult situations, learning from bad experiences, practical things you can do, and signposts the reader to sources of help.

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### **New Parent Advisory Groups to be set up in Northern Ireland**

Earlier this year, a new Northern Ireland group was established to improve the outcomes for children and young people. This body is called the 'Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership', and it oversees a number of planning groups across Northern Ireland. One of the mechanisms needed for the planning process to work will be the active involvement and participation of parents. The [Parenting Forum Northern Ireland](#) is, currently, seeking people to form new Parents' Groups. Men are particularly welcome, as they are often under-represented. If you are interested in finding out more, please visit:

[www.parentingni.org/projects/parentingforum/pag.asp](http://www.parentingni.org/projects/parentingforum/pag.asp) or Tel: 028 9031 0891. If you have any questions, contact Alison McNulty or Pauline Martin at this telephone number, or Email: [pauline@parentingni.org](mailto:pauline@parentingni.org)

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## Events

### **The Impact of Recession and Unemployment on Men's Health in Ireland**

[ARK](#) and [Man Matters](#) invite you to a seminar on 'Facing the Challenge: The Impact of the Recession and Unemployment on Men's Health in Ireland'. At this event, Owen Metcalfe (Director of the Institute of Public Health in Ireland) will highlight some of the findings from recent research commissioned by his organisation. This study explored the adverse effects

of the economic recession - and the accompanying rise in unemployment - on men's mental health. The seminar will take place on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2012, from Noon - 1.00pm, in NICVA, 61 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast BT15 2GB. It will be followed by lunch. The seminar is free, but participants need to book a place by Email: [info@ark.ac.uk](mailto:info@ark.ac.uk) or Tel: 028 71675513.

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### **ISA Call for Abstracts on Men and Reproduction**

Internationally, many societies are experiencing a cultural transformation in the role of fathers, and an increased expectation of men's involvement in family life - from reproductive planning to equal parenting. This momentum is being 'pushed' by government policies which are based on the perceived economic, health and well-being benefits of fathers' involvement in children's lives. In academic research, the application of Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities to the sociology of human reproduction also provides an impetus for the conceptualisation of reproduction in inter-relational terms - rather than as 'women's difficulty'. The [Second ISA Forum of Sociology](#) (which will be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 1<sup>st</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> August 2012) is calling for papers which will critically explore men's involvement within the reproduction / parenting arena. Abstracts are invited for papers which might focus upon, for example: fertility / infertility; pregnancy and abortion; adoption; childbirth preparation; assisted reproductive technologies; miscarriage; gay men's desire to have a child; HIV and reproduction; sperm donors ... Abstracts must be submitted via the ISA website ([www.isa-sociology.org/buenos-aires-2012](http://www.isa-sociology.org/buenos-aires-2012)) by 15<sup>th</sup> December 2011. For more information, contact Maria Lohan, Queen's University Belfast, at Email: [m.lohan@qub.ac.uk](mailto:m.lohan@qub.ac.uk)

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## Research

### **Evidence-Based Management Strategies for Treating Obesity in Men**

Are you involved in interventions to help men who are obese to lose weight? If 'yes', then the ROMEO (Review Of MEn and Obesity) study would like to hear from you. We are a team within the Health Services Research Unit at the University of Aberdeen and are, currently, conducting a systematic review on the evidence-based management strategies for treating obesity in men, and how to engage men in these obesity services. To that end, we aim to integrate the quantitative and qualitative evidence base for the management and engagement of men with obesity in weight loss services, researching concurrently to systematically review: (a) The effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions for obesity in men, and men in contrast to women. (b) The effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of interventions to engage men in their weight reduction. (c) The qualitative research with men about obesity management, and providers of such services for men. If you have any information on relevant projects conducted within your organisation that have been written up as a report (whether for internal or external purposes), or have been submitted for publication, or have already been published, we would like to hear from you. Please send any relevant reports or articles you may have to: Health Services Research Unit, School of Medicine and Dentistry, Health Sciences Building, University of Aberdeen, Foresterhill AB25 2ZD or Email: [obesity@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:obesity@abdn.ac.uk) To find out more about this study, visit: [www.hta.ac.uk/project/2545.asp](http://www.hta.ac.uk/project/2545.asp)

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## **Northern Ireland Sport and Physical Activity Survey**

A report on the Northern Ireland Sport and Physical Activity Survey was recently launched by Sport Northern Ireland, the Public Health Agency and the UKCRC Centre of Excellence for Public Health (Northern Ireland). This report provides, for the first time, a complete picture of adult participation in sport and physical activity across Northern Ireland. The report found that most adults in Northern Ireland are not sufficiently active to maintain a general health benefit. In fact, only 35% of Northern Ireland's adult population achieves the required 30 minutes of activity on at least five days per week. What's more, it was found that most physical activity actually occurs at home. This is followed by activities at work, while sporting activities came in third. Copies of the report are available for free online downloading at: [www.sportni.net/Media/Add+Articles/SAPAS2010](http://www.sportni.net/Media/Add+Articles/SAPAS2010)

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## **Health Survey Northern Ireland 2010 / 2011**

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has published the first bulletin from the Health Survey Northern Ireland 2010 / 2011. The survey provides information on a broad range of health issues e.g. general health, mental health, physical activity, diet, obesity, smoking and alcohol use ... The survey results can be accessed at: [www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/media-centre/news-departments/news-dhssps/news-dhssps-151111-health-survey-northern.htm](http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/media-centre/news-departments/news-dhssps/news-dhssps-151111-health-survey-northern.htm)

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## **Dementia: Public Knowledge and Attitudes**

Dementia is the term which is used to describe a group of conditions that affect the brain and cause a progressive decline in the ability to think, remember and learn. It is an issue of global, national and regional concern - since it is estimated that there are 36 million people worldwide living with dementia, and that by 2030 this number will have reached 66 million. [ARK](#) (a joint initiative between Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster) recently launched a new publication on this subject. It is titled: '[Dementia: public knowledge and attitudes](#)' (Research Update 77), and was compiled by Maria McManus and Paula Devine. The findings are based upon data from the 2010 [Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey](#).

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## **Call for Action on Men's Health in Europe**

The European Commission recently published a "[State of Men's Health in Europe](#)" Report (*large PDF file*). This report highlights that the health of European men is a serious concern, and draws upon data from the 27 European Union countries plus Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, Lichenstein, Croatia, Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. However, while acknowledging that every year twice as many men of working age (16-64 years) die compared to women, the European Commission offers few suggestions or recommendations as to how to address this situation. To fill this void, the [European Men's Health Forum](#) (EMHF) has produced a [document](#) which starts from the simple position that males should not, necessarily, die earlier, and that there are things that can be done to change their lives for the better. This response is available online, and challenges politicians, health professionals, employers, educators, social engineers and men, themselves, to not only ask why this situation occurs, but also what should be done about it and how.

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## Web Links

### Men's Issues on the Web ...

[Over 40% of cancers due to lifestyle, says review](#)  
[New study says men are not sex crazed after all](#)  
[Scientists question if Wi-Fi laptops can damage sperm](#)  
[Researchers find men less willing to be screened for cancer](#)  
[Repeat offenders appear to have worse health in middle-age](#)

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## Next Edition

The next edition of E-Male Matters will be released in February 2012 - there will not be a January edition. Do you know of anything (research, events, resources, news etc.) affecting men and boys which should be included in it? There's a simple template for all articles. Let us know (within 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](mailto:emalematters@mhfi.org) The submission deadline for the February edition is Friday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

"E-Male Matters" is also available online at: [www.mhfi.org/about-e-male-matters.html](http://www.mhfi.org/about-e-male-matters.html)

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

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