

# E-Male Matters

May 2013

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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## News

### The Final Countdown to Men's Health Week 2013 has begun

We're nearly there. The clock is ticking ... it won't be long now until [International Men's Health Week](#) (MHW). This year, it will run from Monday 10<sup>th</sup> until Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2013. The theme in Ireland will focus upon '**Action Men**' and there is a call for everyone (policy makers, service providers, men themselves ...) to '**turn words into actions**' i.e. stop just talking about men's health and do something practical to help to improve it.

As always, the overarching 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 and activities; encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males. Therefore, any events and activities to celebrate this occasion are very welcome. To find out more about this week and how you can get involved, visit: [www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2013.html](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2013.html) Alternatively, download the MHW 2013 Briefing Paper at: [www.mhfi.org/mhw2013briefing.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw2013briefing.pdf)

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## Men's Health Week 2013 Poster now Available

Even if you don't do anything else to support [Men's Health Week](#) (MHW) this year, you can at least put up a poster to let everyone know when it's taking place! To highlight MHW 2013, a new poster features Michael Glover from the [Man Matters](#) project in Northern Ireland. The message on this poster is very simple: *Turn Words into Actions!* The posters are free, and are available in A<sub>3</sub> size hard copy as well as in a range of electronic formats (from the Men's Health Forum in Ireland website). You can find details of how to get copies of these posters at: [www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2013.html](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2013.html)

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## Publicise your Men's Health Week Event

Every year there are hundreds (possibly even thousands) of events throughout Ireland to celebrate Men's Health Week. Some of these are well publicised, but most are only known about by a few people! This year, the [Men's Health Forum in Ireland](#) (MHFI) will have a section on its website to promote the details of any activities or events that are being held throughout Ireland during [Men's Health Week 2013](#). This will help everyone to find out what is happening during the week, where it will take place, and how to join in. It will also give some recognition and publicity to all those groups across Ireland that are doing something for and with men. Your activity might be health checks, or a conference, or a launch, or a game, or a seminar, or a competition, or a workshop, or a lunch, or a course, or a drama, or a display, or a health fair ... Whatever it is, if you would like to have the details included on this website, please complete and submit a MHW Event Form on the MHFI website at:

[www.mhfi.org/mhw/submit-an-event.html](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw/submit-an-event.html)

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## What can I do to mark Men's Health Week 2013?

Absolutely everyone can do something to support and celebrate [Men's Health Week](#) (MHW) 2013. The focus for this year (i.e. *'Action Men - Turning Words into Actions'*) lends itself to a wide range of ways to mark this occasion. However, you don't have to stick rigidly to this particular topic. Anything which encourages men and boys to lead healthier lifestyles, to be more aware of preventable health problems, and to seek early detection and treatment for health difficulties will be very welcome. You might have time, energy and resources to plan something big. However, even if you can't, there are still simple and easy ways to get involved. These include ...

- Putting a [MHW poster](#) (or two) up in your workplace / meeting space / community centre / local shop / bar / waiting room / home ...
- Promoting the week on your website - using a copy of the [MHW logo](#) or [web banner](#).
- Linking to the Men's Health Forum in Ireland's website page devoted to Men's Health Week 2013 ([www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2013.html](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2013.html)) from your own website, Facebook page or other social networking site.
- Sending an email to everyone in your contacts list to tell them about Men's Health Week, and asking them to forward the message to all their contacts.
- Becoming a fan of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/MensHealthForumIreland](http://www.facebook.com/MensHealthForumIreland)) and sending this link to all your online friends.
- Inserting the MHW logo into your outgoing emails for the months of May and June.
- Including information on MHW in your mailouts / newsletters.
- Telling others about what is happening in your area during MHW by posting details on the MHFI website (use the form at: [www.mhfi.org/mhw/submit-an-event.html](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw/submit-an-event.html)).
- Making the MHW logo your computer desktop 'wallpaper' during May and June.
- Reminding your colleagues to follow all the latest MHW news on Twitter ([www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL](http://www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL)).

- Encouraging the men you know to get involved in some of the activities taking place during MHW 2013 ...

For more ideas, download a copy of our paper on what you can do to mark MHW 2013 at: [www.mhfi.org/mhw2013celebrateit.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw2013celebrateit.pdf)

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### **Facebook and Twitter Pages Seek Fans!**

To keep everyone up-to-date with the latest news on [Men's Health Week \(MHW\) 2013](#) - as well as more general developments in the field of men's work - you can pretend that you're young, hip and cool, and visit Facebook and Twitter. To find out more, see:

[www.facebook.com/MensHealthForumIreland](http://www.facebook.com/MensHealthForumIreland) and [www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL](http://www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL)

However, as all social networkers know, pages such as these are no use unless they have a lot of Fans / Followers. That's where your help is needed! ... Please visit the pages, click on the 'LIKE' button for Facebook and 'FOLLOW' button for Twitter, and send the link to all your friends. Even if you're not on Facebook and/or Twitter, just visit the pages regularly for an update.

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### **Free Counselling Sessions for Men**

Helplink's ([www.helplink.ie](http://www.helplink.ie)) national online or by phone counselling service is offering 14 free counselling sessions to men to mark International Men's Health Week 2013. They are giving away two sessions a day throughout the week. All you have to do is email [counselling@helplink.ie](mailto:counselling@helplink.ie) with your name and a phone number, quoting 'IMH Week', and they will offer session dates and times during that week for you to choose from.

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### **Victim Support NI Spin into Action**

[Victim Support NI](#) is in pole position when assisting those who have been affected by crime. The charity ran a Spin-a-thon event last September with many locally elected representatives testing their endurance during the gruelling cycle. The distances from each of the five Victim Support NI offices across Northern Ireland simulated the challenge facing each of the participants. Victim Support NI is the charity that assists those affected by crime. It does this through: emotional and practical support provided through the organisation's Community Service; offering expertise in completing a Criminal Injuries Compensation form when affected by violent crime; providing support to victims and witnesses when going through the court service. Last year's Spin-a-thon event raised £1,192.45 for victims of crime, with participants cycling a collective distance of 2,495km. It is hoped the organisation will have a bigger, better event this year. If you would like to get more information about the Spin-a-thon event, Tel: 02890 324133 or Email: [info@victimsupportni.org.uk](mailto:info@victimsupportni.org.uk)

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### **Active Lives after Cancer**

The 'Active Lives After Cancer' project aims to support isolated people (aged 60+) from North Belfast who are affected by cancer. The project is specifically targeted at those with a cancer diagnosis - and their family/carers - who are not, currently, accessing support services. It offers: short term befriending visits; get-togethers; complementary therapies; transport to and from Cancer Lifeline; counselling; group health and wellbeing events. [Cancer Lifeline](#) supports people who live in North Belfast, the Shankill area and Newtownabbey. The organisation is managed by individuals who have experience of cancer. For more information, Tel: 02890 351999 / Email: [info@cancerlifeline.info](mailto:info@cancerlifeline.info) or visit: [www.cancerlifeline.info](http://www.cancerlifeline.info)

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## The SpermComet™ Test - saving you time, money and heartache

Infertility affects approximately 1 in 6 couples, and 40% of the problems experienced are related to the man. Under the guidance of Professor Sheena Lewis, research at [Queen's University Belfast](#) has shown that alcohol intake, recreational drug use, and smoking all cause damage to sperm. Damage to sperm DNA affects every fertility checkpoint and increases the risk of miscarriage. At [Lewis Fertility Testing](#), the SpermComet™ Test has been developed. This is a second-generation sperm DNA damage test that provides more information than conventional semen analysis or any other sperm DNA test. With individual sperm analysed for DNA damage, this is the most sensitive DNA test available. Clinically defined thresholds guide couples to the best course of fertility treatment for them. The Test can also explain 80% of previously unexplained infertility. For further information, visit: [www.lewisfertilitytesting.com](http://www.lewisfertilitytesting.com)

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## Events

### From Policy to Practice: Profiling the Impact of Ireland's National Men's Health Policy

To celebrate Men's Health Week 2013, the [Health Service Executive](#) (HSE) and [Men's Health Forum in Ireland](#) (MHFI) invite you to 'From Policy to Practice: Profiling the Impact of Ireland's National Men's Health Policy'. This event will take place on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2013, in Dr Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8, from 10.00am - 4.00pm. The aim of this free event is to profile the key outputs in the area of men's health in Ireland that have been delivered since the publication of the Men's Health Policy and Five Year Action Plan in 2009, and to set priorities for key policy areas in men's health in the future. The programme will involve keynote addresses from two leading experts in men's health (Noel Richardson and Kate Hunt), workshops on a range of men's health topics, and poster presentations from a diverse spectrum of organisations on the island of Ireland who work in the field of men's health and well-being. For more detail on the programme and the application process, see: [www.mhfi.org/dublin2013invitation.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/dublin2013invitation.pdf) Please note that places at this event are extremely limited, and that there is a deadline for receipt of applications.

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### Green Ribbon Campaign

During May 2013, [See Change](#) has been rolling out a month long [Green Ribbon](#) campaign to get people in Ireland talking openly about mental health problems. More than 150,000 green ribbons will be distributed nationwide - free of charge - to spark a national conversation about mental health in boardrooms, break-rooms, chat rooms, clubhouses, arts venues, college campuses and around kitchen tables throughout Ireland. The aim is to make the month of May every year synonymous with promoting open conversation about mental health, and challenging the stigma which is often attached to mental health problems. For more information, visit: [www.greenribbon.ie](http://www.greenribbon.ie)

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### ManAlive Conference 2013

This year the [Cancer Focus](#) ManAlive Conference will take place on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013, from 9.30am - 4.00pm, in the Adair Suite, Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown, Co. Tyrone. This conference will focus on the male journey through the cancer experience, and will update healthcare workers and individuals with an interest in men's health on cancer issues affecting men. To register your interest, or for further information, contact Alison Brown at Email: [alisonbrown@cancerfocusni.org](mailto:alisonbrown@cancerfocusni.org) or Tel: 02890 663281.

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### **Real Health Advice for Real Men**

You are invited to attend men's health events which are being run across the Northern Health and Social Care Trust area. These will take place in June to coincide with Men's Health Week, are free, and will be strictly male only. Each session will offer health advice and fun activities in a male friendly environment. On every evening, there will be a talk by Conor McCafferty of Zest, followed by a hearty supper. See [www.mhfi.org/realhealthadvice.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/realhealthadvice.pdf) for a list of dates, times and venues. If you require any further information on the events in Coleraine, Ballymena or Ballymoney contact Amanda Pollock at Tel: 0774 0282650 / Email: [amanda@nacn.org](mailto:amanda@nacn.org) For the Antrim event, contact Wendy Kerr at Tel: 02894 478645. For the Magherafelt event, contact Denise Doherty at Tel: 02879 634865.

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### **A Perfect Vision for Mental Health 20/20**

EUFAMI is the European Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Illness, and is based in Leuven, Belgium. EUFAMI works and lobbies on behalf of millions of family members who care for relatives who are affected by severe mental illness. EUFAMI is working with Shine to organise a conference on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2013, in the Radisson Blu Hotel, Dublin Airport. This European-wide event will attract between 150 and 200 delegates (together with many of their partners and families), from approximately 28 countries. The theme of the conference is: 'A Perfect Vision for Mental Health 20/20'. It will explore best practice in how families interact with mental health services, their role in the care and treatment of their relatives living in the community, and policy making in Europe. Further information and registration details can be found at: [www.eufami.org](http://www.eufami.org)

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### **Action Cancer - Action Man**

Throughout the month of June 2013, [Action Cancer](#) will be offering a series of health check events to men throughout Northern Ireland. These will take place in Enniskillen (4<sup>th</sup> June), Belfast (10<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> June), Derry / Londonderry (18<sup>th</sup> June), and Ballymena (25<sup>th</sup> June). Each MOT Health Check will offer tests for cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, body composition, facial skin analysis and peak flow. Lifestyle assessment and advice on cancer prevention and detection will also be provided. For more information, contact Malachy Nixon at Tel: 02890 803344 or Email: [mnixon@actioncancer.org](mailto:mnixon@actioncancer.org)

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## Training

### **Top Tips for Looking after Yourself**

To mark Men's Health Week 2013, the Belfast Men's Health Group (BMHG) and the [Belfast Health and Social Care Trust](#) would like to invite you to a training session titled: 'Top Tips for Looking after Yourself'. Stress can affect anyone. It doesn't just make you feel bad - it can also be bad for your health. The good news is there are steps you can take to deal with it. This workshop outlines practical ways for you to start dealing with stress and to stop it building up in the future. This free programme will be delivered on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2013, from 10.00am - 1.00pm, in Clady Villa, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Belfast. If you are interested in attending, contact Paul O'Kane via email at: [paul.okane@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:paul.okane@belfasttrust.hscni.net) Please note that places are limited.

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## Looking after your Mental Health and Preventing Depression

[Aware Defeat Depression](#), and sister organisation [Aware](#), work to help people affected by depression, and the family and friends of those affected by depression. The primary focus is to support people through all stages of their recovery from their depression. Aware Defeat Depression in Northern Ireland and Aware in the Republic, facilitate support groups throughout the country. The purpose of these groups is to bring together people affected by depression, and to offer a unique opportunity to talk openly about depression and its impact. Both organisations also deliver free training and programmes which help people to understand the importance of depression and looking after their own mental health. Aware Defeat Depression runs the 'Mood Matters' programme - a series of depression awareness programmes which aim to promote knowledge and help individuals to develop an understanding of the importance of looking after their own mental health. Aware in the South delivers a 'Life Skills' programme which allows participants to learn how to manage their feelings when they feel stressed, worried or depressed. People will also learn simple and practical skills to help them cope with life's challenges. Visit [www.aware-ni.org](http://www.aware-ni.org) and [www.aware.ie](http://www.aware.ie) for more details, and to find out how either organisation can help you.

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## Research

### Launch of Results from Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey 2012

[ARK](#) is holding a seminar to launch the results of the 2012 [Northern Ireland Life and Times Survey](#). In 'Autism Awareness and Attitudes: A general population baseline', Karola Dillenburger, Julie-Ann Jordan and Lynne McKerr (School of Education, Queen's University Belfast) will focus on knowledge and public attitudes to the social, employment, educational and housing issues facing people with autism, as well as highlighting personal experiences. The seminar will take place on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013, in the Canada Room, Queen's University Belfast, at 11.30am. It will be followed by a light lunch. This event is free of charge, but places need to be booked by Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013 via Tel: 028 7167 5513 or Email: [info@ark.ac.uk](mailto:info@ark.ac.uk) The Life and Times Survey records public attitudes in Northern Ireland to key social issues. The 2012 survey focused on autism, community relations, minority ethnic groups, migrant workers, asylum seekers and other equality issues. Full results of the 2012 survey will be available at [www.ark.ac.uk/nilt](http://www.ark.ac.uk/nilt) on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

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### A Touchy Subject: Men and Eating Disorders

Eating Disorders (EDs) and body image issues are, traditionally, thought of as something only women suffer from. However, research shows that the number of men with disorders such as Anorexia or Bulimia is growing rapidly in the UK and Ireland. EDs are no longer just for girls. Treatment and support is available across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. However, the stigma facing males suffering from these disorders creates massive barriers to men getting help. A study is being carried out in the [University of Ulster](#) to look at the barriers facing men of all ages regarding disordered eating, over-exercising and body image issues. This research aims to give a voice to men on these issues. We want to talk to anyone working with men or with experience of these issues. For more information, contact Una Foye at Email: [foye-u@email.ulster.ac.uk](mailto:foye-u@email.ulster.ac.uk) or Tel: 02890 366291. For information on male EDs, visit [www.mengetedstoo.co.uk](http://www.mengetedstoo.co.uk) or contact EDANI on Tel: 02890 235959.

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## Why Disadvantaged Men in Mid-Life are at Excessive Risk of Suicide

To highlight the publication of 'Men and Suicide: Why it's a Social Issue', the Samaritans invite you to attend a free public lecture titled: '*Why Disadvantaged Men in Mid-Life are at Excessive Risk of Suicide*'. This will be led by Professor Rory O'Connor from the University of Stirling, and will take place on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2013, from 7.00pm - 8.00pm, in Room LG.115 of Queen's University Belfast's David Keir Building on Stranmillis Road. To book a place, visit <https://response.questback.com/britishpsychologicalsociety/menandsuicide>

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## Web Links

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

[Opportunity in health care system to reach out to boys contemplating suicide](#)

[Prostate cancer: Case to test men in their 40s](#)

[Sexual harassment linked to eating disorder in men](#)

[One young man's experience of depression](#)

[Bad cholesterol lowered in men on heart-healthy diet, regardless of weight loss](#)

[Gender admissions gap in universities 'growing' under higher fees](#)

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## Next Edition

The next edition of E-Male Matters will be released in June 2013. 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 June edition is Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

E-Male Matters is also available online at:

[www.mhfi.org/newsletters/about-e-male-matters.html](http://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

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