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# ‘Engaging Young Men’ Project: Terms of Reference for Advisory Group

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## Background to Project

Between March 2011 and October 2012, the Men’s Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) coordinated an all-island action learning project which involved a broad range of stakeholders including the Health Service Executive (HSE), the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP), the Public Health Agency (PHA) and the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (IPH). This initiative sought to identify a range of possible means to promote positive mental health among young men on the island of Ireland and to assess the efficacy of these approaches. This venture was called the ‘Young Men and Suicide Project’ (YMSP).

The final report ([www.mhfi.org/ymspfullreport.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/ymspfullreport.pdf)) on this project was launched in January 2013, and the ‘Conclusion and Recommendations’ section made twelve key proposals. MHFI reviewed and discussed these proposals with key stakeholders, including NOSP, and concluded that Recommendation 10 (i.e. develop a one day training programme for all frontline staff on how to effectively engage with young men) would present an immediate opportunity to make a significant contribution to this area of work. Subsequently, MHFI sought, and received, funding from NOSP to begin to implement Recommendation 10. This initiative is called ‘Engaging Young Men’.

## Aim of Engaging Young Men

The core aim of this project is to develop a training package which will increase the capacity of service providers and practitioners to effectively engage with young men in relation to programmes which promote mental health and well-being.

## Objectives of Project

There are four key objectives to this initiative:

1. Conduct a **mapping exercise** which will identify the training needs of a wide variety of organisations, seek feedback on how the training might be delivered most appropriately, and shape the focus, content and structure of the training package.
2. Apply a **gender lens** to organisations, by developing an audit tool and a self-assessment quality mark classification system to help agencies to assess how male-friendly they currently are.
3. Create a dedicated **Course Unit titled ‘Engaging with Young Men’** within the Engage National Men’s Health Training Programme. This Unit will be offered to qualified Engage Trainers as a top-up module, as well as being offered to service providers and practitioners throughout Ireland in a workshop format.
4. Act as a **portal and reference point** for information on young men and mental health in Ireland.

## Timescale

It is envisaged that this will be a three year programme. However, at present, funding has only been secured for Year 1. Future funding is dependent upon both meeting targets and the availability of resources.

## Phases of Development

Action	Beneficiaries	When
Conduct a 'mapping exercise' of the training needs of organisations who currently work, or could potentially work, with young men on mental health issues	Eight Focus Groups - each group comprised of people in a specific area of work	Year 1
Develop an audit tool and system of self-classification to help organisations to assess how young male-friendly they currently are	Available to any group interested in this field	Years 1-2
Create and deliver a Unit within the 'Engage - National Men's Health Training Programme' which focuses upon how to effectively work with young men	25 qualified 'Engage' Trainers plus 100 additional practitioners	Years 1-3
Act as an Irish portal for information / training on young men and mental health	Available to any individual or group	Years 1-3

## Management and Governance

The project will be overseen by an Advisory Group comprised of representatives from NOSP, HSE Health Promotion Department, IPH and MHFI. If and when deemed appropriate, other organisations, with specific experience in this field of work, may be invited to contribute.

The ongoing development process will be managed by the Director of Operations within MHFI. This person's work will be supervised by the Forum's Board of Trustees.

## Role of the Advisory Group

The role of the Advisory Group will be to ...

- Offer a broad range of experience, contacts, ideas, research and resources to achieve the aims of this initiative.
- Help to guide the overall direction of the project.
- Suggest the means to achieve the operational goals.
- Promote and raise awareness of the project.
- Provide support to meet the objectives set.
- Help to review progress.

## Modus Operandi

- The Steering Group will meet at least three times per year.
- Meetings will be held via videolink between the Dublin and Belfast offices of the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (IPH).
- Owen Metcalfe (Director of IPH) will Chair all meetings. In his absence, meetings will be Chaired by Noel Richardson (MHFI Board of Trustees).
- Additional business will be conducted on an ongoing basis via email and, if required, by teleconferencing.
- Advisory Group meetings will be convened and minuted by the MHFI Director of Operations.
- All minutes, updates and reports will be circulated via email.
- The MHFI Director of Operations will submit a quarterly progress report to NOSP (using the standard NOSP template), and will also circulate it to all Advisory Group members.