

'Are middle-aged men not interested in looking after their own mental health, or are we simply not offering them the right things in the right way? ...'

If you work in the Republic of Ireland, are curious about the answer to this question, and would like to explore practical strategies to help your organisation to engage more effectively with middle-aged men, then you might be interested in a free one day workshop on ...

'Men in the Middle'

- engaging middle-aged men in mental health and wellbeing



This workshop has been developed by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI), and is a new Unit within the highly successful and long-running 'Engage' National Men's Health Training Programme. It has been funded by the HSE's National Office for Suicide Prevention. **MHFI IS, CURRENTLY, LOOKING FOR GROUPS WHO WOULD LIKE TO HOST THIS FREE WORKSHOP FOR THEIR STAFF / VOLUNTEERS / ACTIVISTS.**

Do you have a group of staff who would be interested in availing of this opportunity? Could you gather together a group of your network colleagues who would be keen to explore this area? Is your men's group / Men's Shed thinking about how to increase engagement with middle-aged men around mental health issues? Would you be able to host a workshop? Are you an individual worker who would like to come together with others to tease out the potential for connecting more effectively with middle-aged men? ...

If 'yes', read on. There is a team of trained facilitators from all parts of the Republic of Ireland who are keen to deliver this workshop in 2020. However, we only have a limited capacity to do this - so you need to get in early!

Background to Workshop

In March 2018, a landmark report titled *'Middle-Aged Men and Suicide in Ireland'* (www.mhfi.org/MAMRMreport.pdf) was launched. This was one element of a wider *'Middle-Aged Men and Mental Health Project'* coordinated by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland and funded by the National Office for Suicide Prevention. The aim of this qualitative study was to explore the factors underpinning the high suicide rate among middle-aged men (40-59 years old) in the Republic of Ireland, with a view to providing more effective and gender specific programmes, services, and resources that can support their mental health and wellbeing. To meet the need from practitioners to develop meaningful relationships with this target group, the Engage National Men's Health Training Programme developed a new workshop titled *'Men in the Middle'*.

Aim of Workshop

The aim of the *'Men in the Middle'* workshops is to assist a broad range of practitioners and service providers to effectively connect with / develop practical strategies for engaging with middle-aged men around mental health and wellbeing issues. It focuses on the engagement process (i.e. WHY and HOW to build relationships with middle-aged men), rather than offering a new mental health programme (i.e. what to offer them). This is because workers who have had success in engaging this target group say that if you can get the 'why' and the 'how' right, anything is possible.

Objectives for Workshop

The key objectives for this workshop are to explore themes such as ...

- How to create a 'safe space' for middle-aged men.
- Why we need to work with middle-aged men around mental health issues.
- Empathising with the world of middle-aged men, the key issues that they face, and the specific pressures upon / difficulties facing them.
- Protective factors for good mental health and wellbeing in middle-age.
- Our own value base, experience, attitudes towards and expectations of middle-aged men, and how this impacts upon our interactions.
- Examples of what works in practice / what a male-friendly service might look like.

Who Should Attend?

This interactive and experiential workshop will be of interest to a broad range of service providers and practitioners who wish to connect in more meaningful ways with middle-aged men.

Facilitators

The workshops are co-delivered by at least two facilitators who have successfully completed the Engage National Men's Health Programme's Training for Trainers course for this Unit.

Cost

The *'Men in the Middle'* workshops are free for all participants.

Further Information

To arrange a workshop, or to obtain further information, please contact:

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