

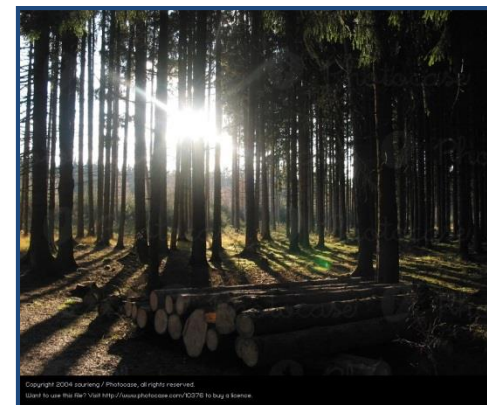
Middle-Aged Men and Suicide in Ireland



*‘Men in the Middle’
Men’s Health Symposium*

Dr Steevens’ Hospital

Thursday, 15th March, 2018



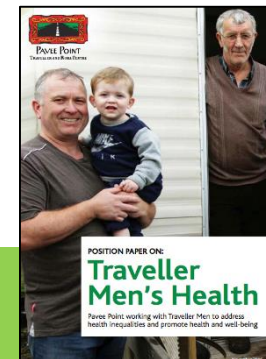
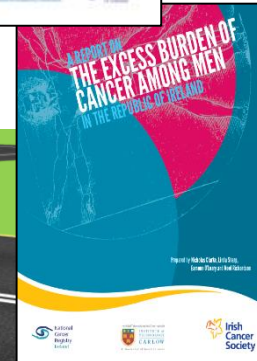
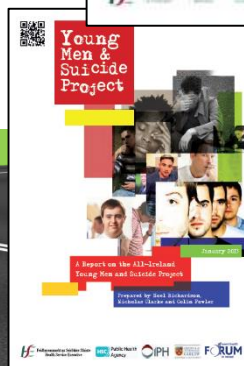
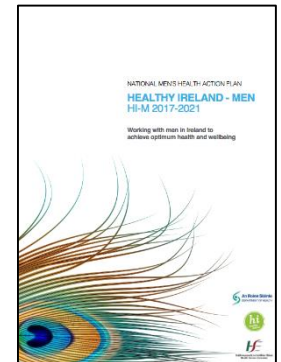
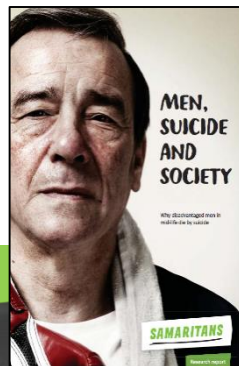
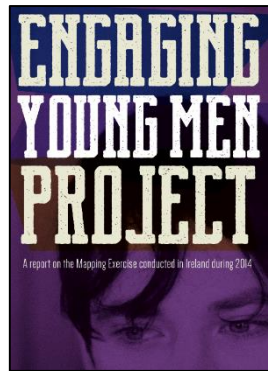
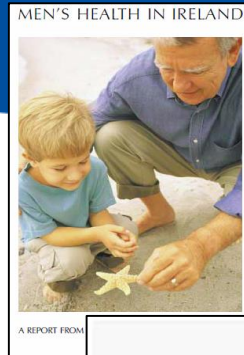
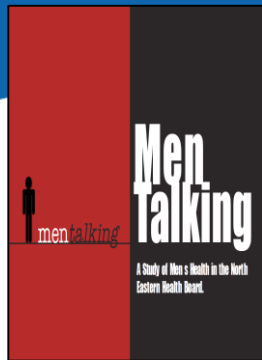
Shane O’Donnell

Marie-Curie Early Stage Researcher, Queen’s University Belfast

Dr Noel Richardson,

Director, National Centre of Men’s Health, Institute of Technology Carlow

Introduction



Why Middle-Aged Men? - Suicide Rates



0-19

Yrs Old



20-39

Yrs Old



40-59

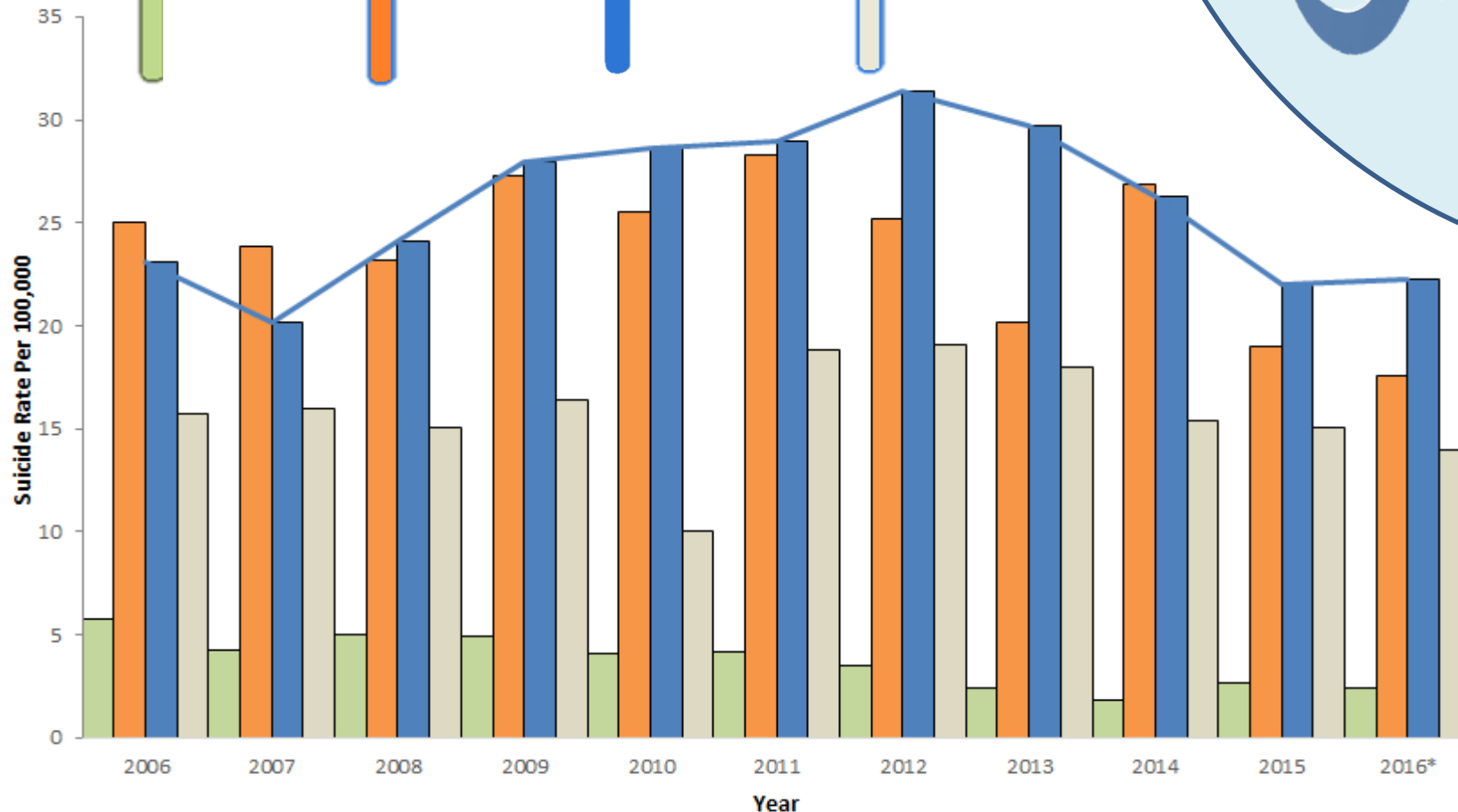
Yrs Old



60+

Yrs Old

**Male Suicide Rate
4.4 Times Greater**



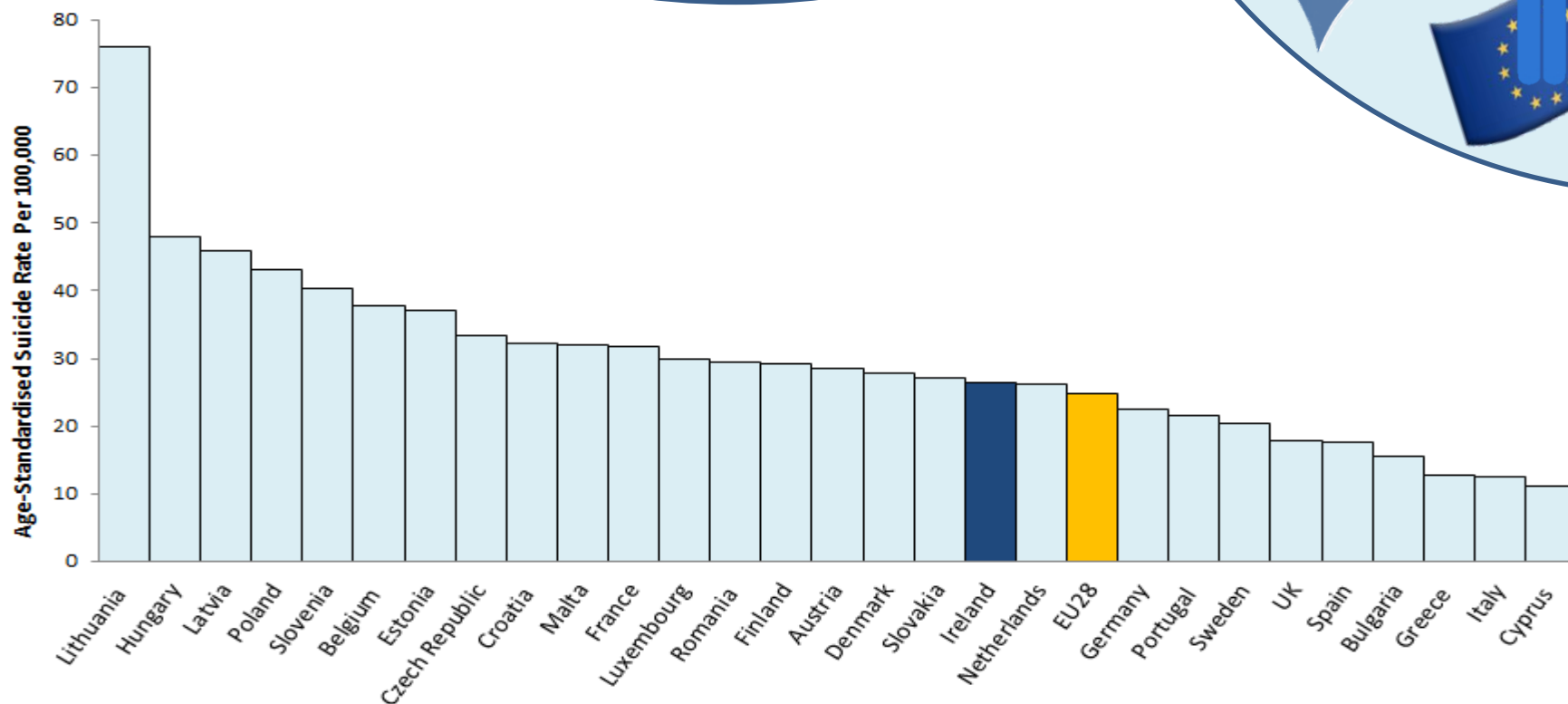
Why Middle-Aged Men? - Suicide Rates



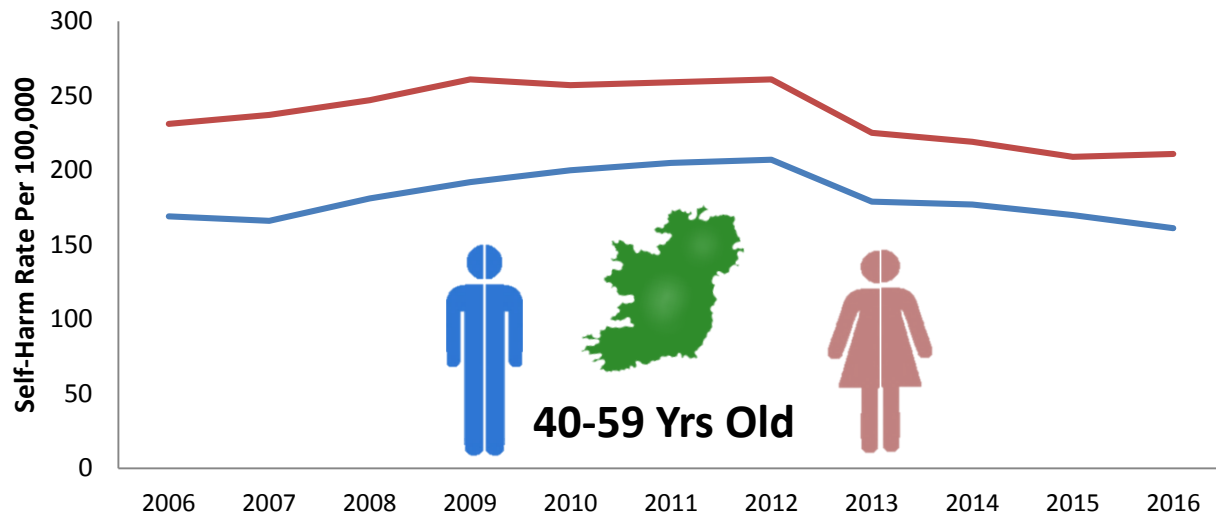
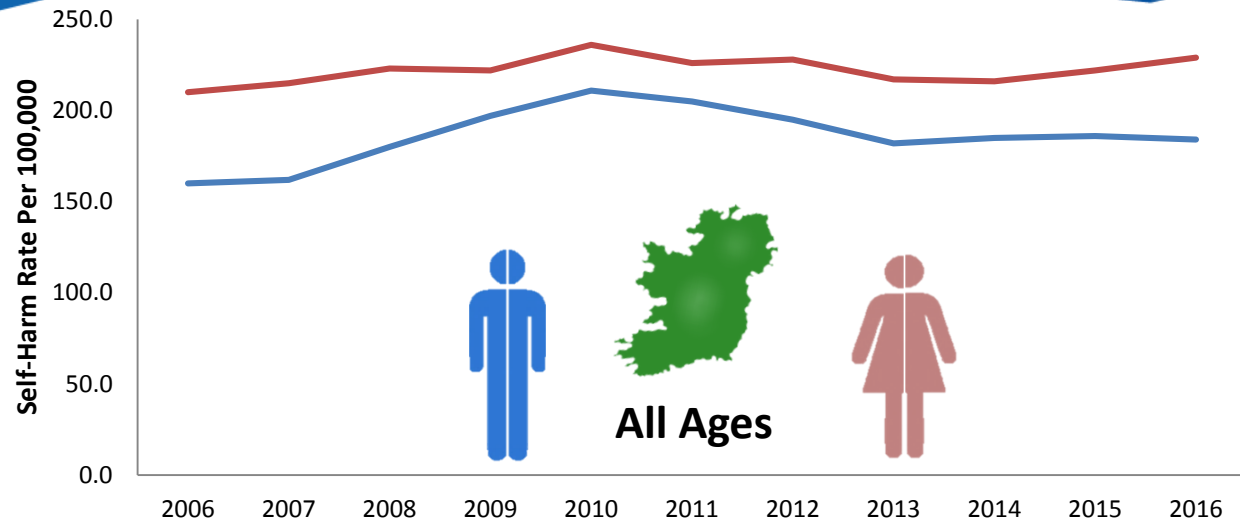
40-59
Yrs Old

Suicide Rate of 26.4
per 100,000 in 2014

EU Suicide Rate of
24.8 per 100,000 in
2014



Why Middle-Aged Men? – Self-Harm Rates

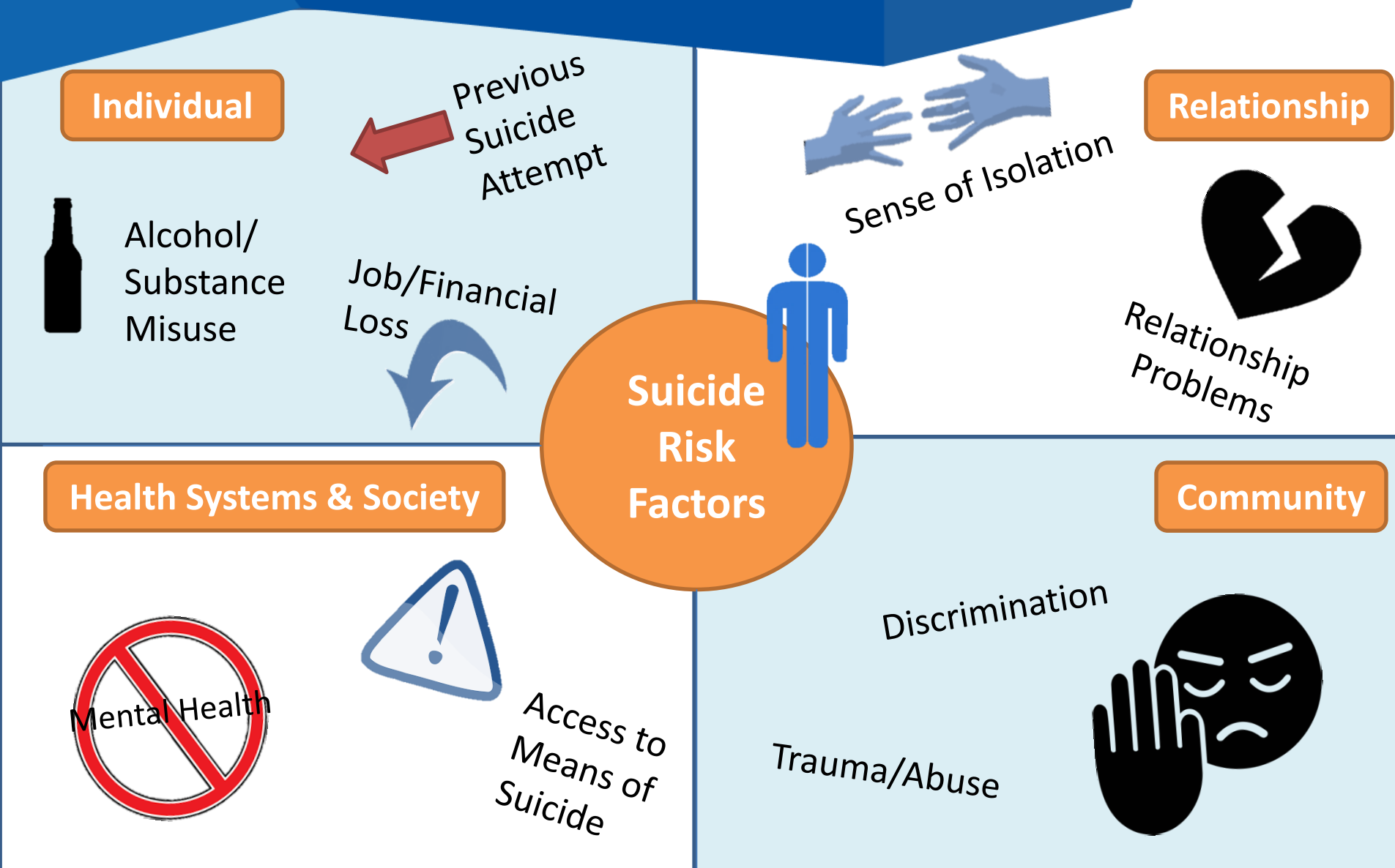


Higher Lethality of
Self-Harms Acts
Used by Males

Higher Risk
of Suicide
Following Self-Harm
Act for Males



Suicide Risk Factors (WHO, 2014)



Suicide Protective Factors (WHO, 2014)



**Lifestyle Practice of
Positive Coping
Strategies and
Wellbeing**



Strong Personal Connections



**Spiritual and Religious
Beliefs**

Aim of the Study



Explore the factors underpinning the high suicide rates among middle-aged men at risk of marginalisation in the Republic of Ireland, with a view to providing more effective and gender specific programmes, services and resources that support their mental health and wellbeing.



What Did We Do?

Study Design

Qualitative
Research

Recruitment

Purposive
and Snowball
Sampling

Research
Approach

Data Analysis



Data Collection

Focus Groups
and Phone
Interviews



Participants: Men and Service Providers



Connecting for Life



- Gay Men
- Transgender Men
- Traveller Men
- Male Victims of Domestic Violence
- Non-Irish National Men
- Farmers
- Divorced Fathers
- Unemployed Men
- Rurally Isolated Men

- Mental Health Organisations
- Men's Health Expert Group
- Community Based Workers with a Remit for Men's Health
- Statutory Mental Health Services
- Community and Voluntary Organisations
- GPs
- Defence Forces

What Did We Find?

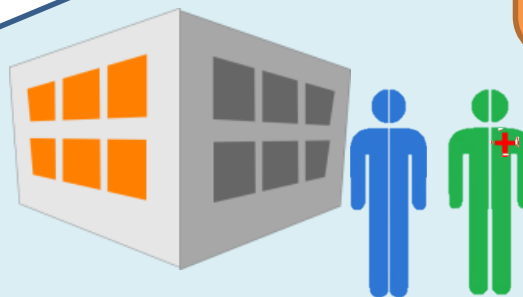
Marginalised Masculinities



Support Seeking and 'Coping' Mechanisms



Negotiating the Dynamics of Engaging Middle-Aged Men



Theme 1: Marginalised Masculinities

Societal Challenges



“We’re the **last generation** before the **huge change** out there...sometimes you think **am I part of this world or that one?**”
Alan, Rural Isolated Man.

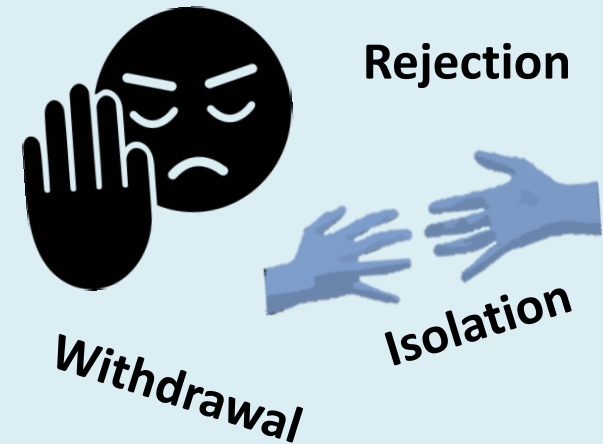
Mid-Life Transitions



Life and Career Opportunities

“It’s the **shame**...they want them [new shoes] but **you can’t get them**... that would **depress you**. The Travelling man is the **provider**.” *Liam, Traveller Man.*

Subordinated Identities



“Walk into a pub... you get **refused**. You feel that **small**, you feel like **scum**”. **Joe, Traveller Man.**

Theme 1: Marginalised Masculinities

Societal Challenges



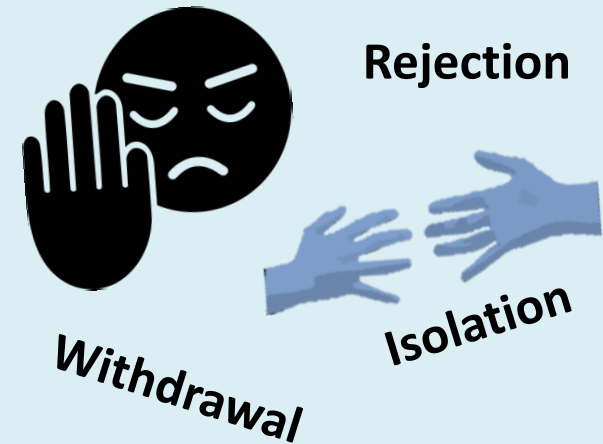
“Men were usually the breadwinner in our generation.. I think men feel they have lost their way or they are not needed as much as they used to be”
Leonard, Rural Isolated Man.

Mid-Life Transitions



“Plans you would have had for the future, and you are in that future, and it hasn’t happened the way you expected...possibilities, opportunities”
Dermot, Gay Man.

Subordinated Identities



“Complete isolation. Your marriage breaks down, your kids no longer need you, you haven’t a job to go to...you need social interaction, when you don’t have that it makes you...think what is the point of being here?”
Simon, Divorced Father.

Theme 2: Support Seeking and 'Coping' Mechanisms

"It's not like a stitch in time saves nine, you wait till the whole thing is ripped up to shreds before you ask for help. Why? Man up... things you hear all of your life. Oscar, Transgender Man.

Barriers to Support Seeking and Triggers to/Pathways for Support Seeking



'Unhelpful' and 'Helpful' Coping Mechanisms

"For a group of men, the love in the room was so strong and so intense". Jack, Unemployed Man, Personal Biography.

Theme 2: Support Seeking and 'Coping' Mechanisms

"They say men don't **talk...men have no problem talking whatsoever...Education is a huge** obviously for me – making them aware. Colin, Unemployed Man.

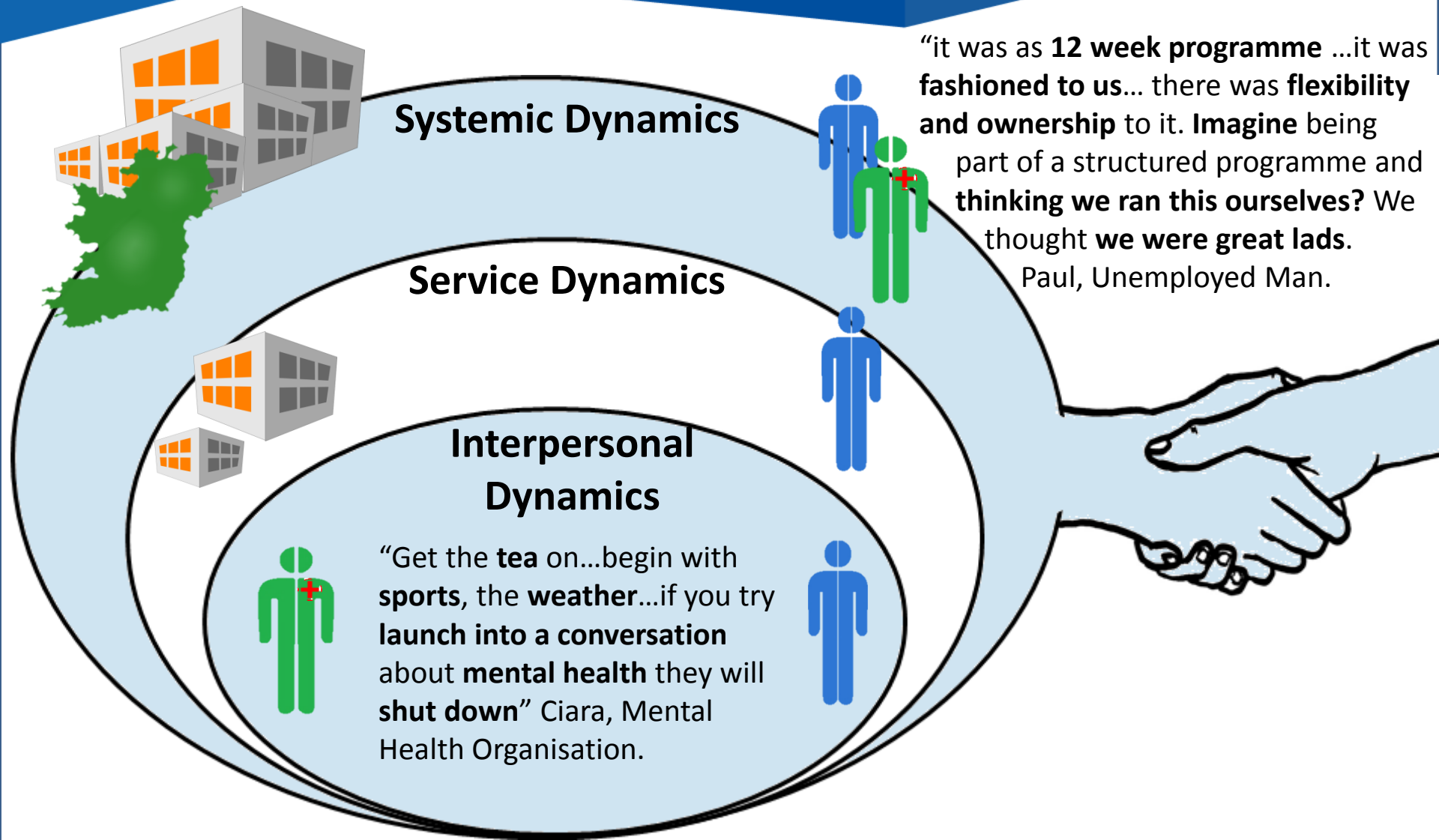
Barriers to Support Seeking and Triggers to/Pathways for Support Seeking



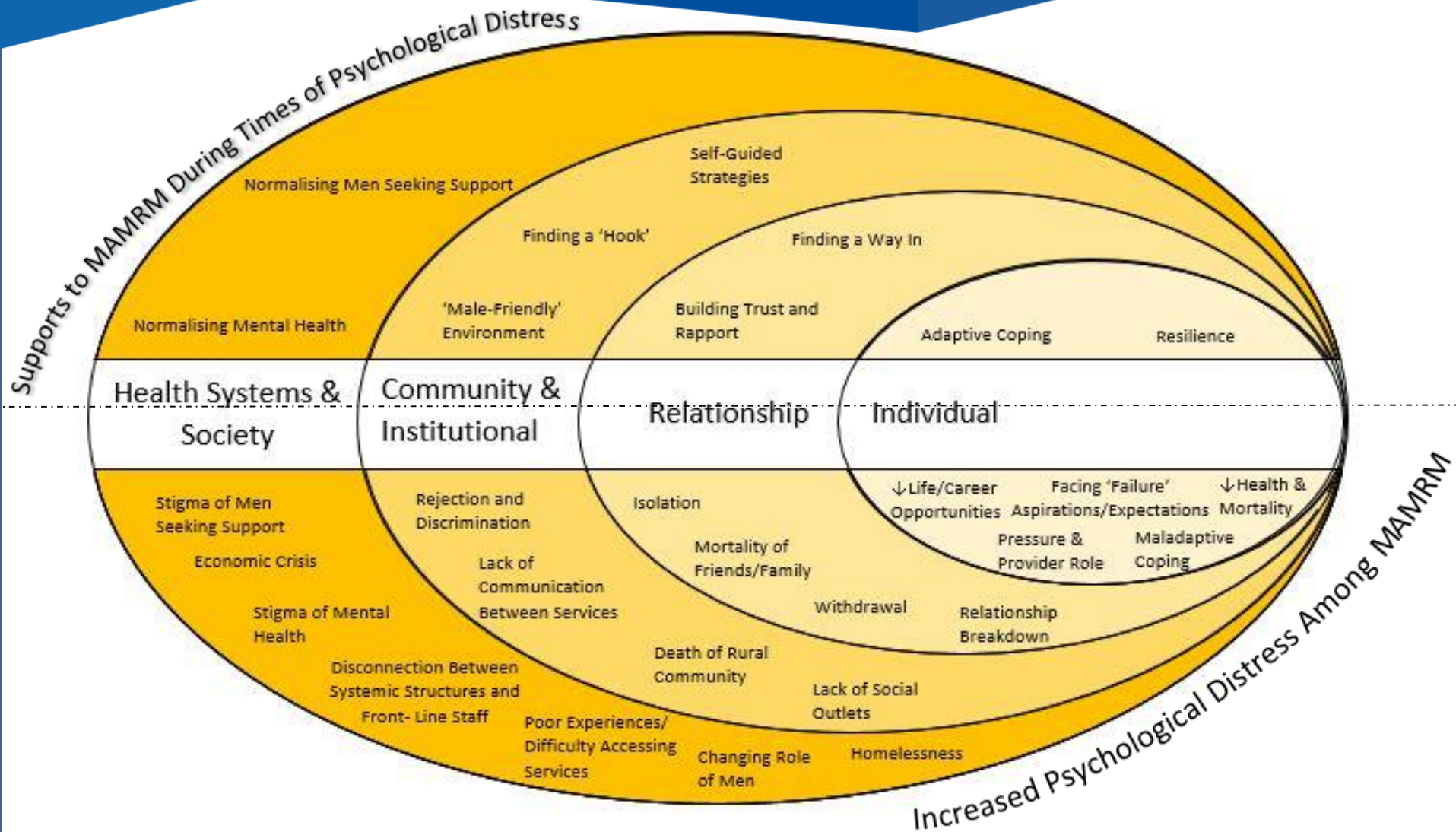
'Unhelpful' and 'Helpful' Coping Mechanisms

"**Drink is a substitute to make you feel good... it takes you out of the dark place. You wake up in the morning and you are back to square one**" Joe, Traveller Man.

Theme 3: Negotiating the Dynamics of Engaging Middle Aged-Men



Engaging Middle-Aged Men in Suicide Prevention Model



Recommendations and Next Steps

Advocacy

Identify and facilitate key advocates to drive the agenda on middle-aged men and suicide prevention in the Republic of Ireland.

Connection

Support middle-age men at risk of marginalisation to build and strengthen relationships with friends, family and service providers.

Communication

Increase lines of communication between services to better support middle-aged men's mental health and wellbeing.

Education and Training

Develop specific education and training programmes for both middle-aged men and service providers to support middle-aged men's mental health and wellbeing.

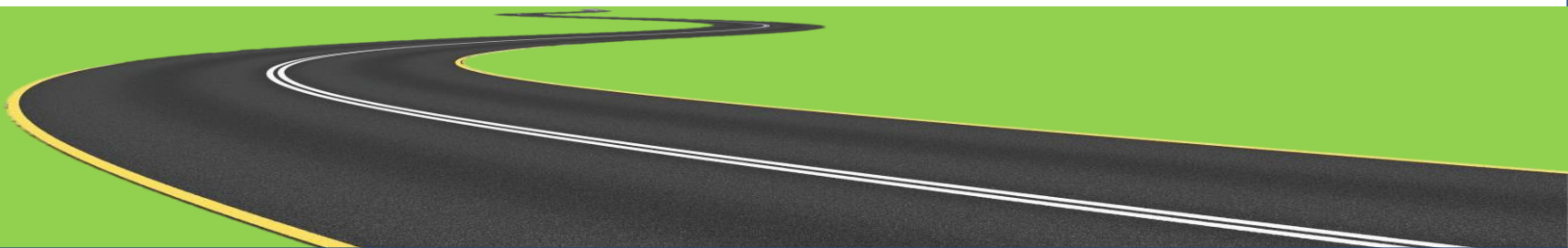
Stigma Reduction & Awareness

Reduce stigma relating to mental health and to men seeking support for a mental health issues, and raise awareness across society on the issue of middle-aged male suicide.

Support

Extend the availability of statutory mental health services nationwide and increase the accessibility to services for marginalised groups of middle-aged men.

Recommendations and Next Steps



Seirbhís Sláinte
Níos Fearr
á Forbairt

Building a
Better Health
Service



Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Cheatharlach



INSTITUTE of
TECHNOLOGY
CARLOW

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Connecting for Life

