
Eircom Men's Health Project: Minutes of First Meeting

Date: Tuesday 19th July 2011
Time: 11.00am - 1.00pm
Venue: IT Carlow
Present: John Wallace, Niall Buckley, Noel Richardson, Colin Fowler
Minutes: Colin Fowler

Issues Discussed:

1. Overview

- Name of initiative = Health Net
- Focus upon men's health awareness (but won't exclude women).
- Target group = Eircom workers who are out-on-the-road on their own, and who make almost all of their communications via Blackberry (whereas in the past they would have had more social contact / meetings / discussions with colleagues).
- Average age of target audience is men in their 50s.

2. Proposed Products / Outputs

- Men's health booklet / handbook.
- Men's health information on the Eircom intranet.
- Ongoing men's health communication via Blackberrys / phone apps.

3. Current Occupational Health Situation in Eircom

- Eircom's Chief medical Officer (CMO) is called Linda Sisson (?) and is based in Dublin.
- Linda is very proactive and supportive about advancing the health of male employees. She is relatively new into post.
- Eircom has very little by way of a company Occupational Health Scheme.
- The system is very reactive, and focuses upon managing the long-term conditions of employees.
- There are some District Medical Officers.

4. MHFI Recommendations for Future Development

- Gather statistics / evidence base - this will help to make the 'business case' by answering the key question: 'why should we be involved?'
- Secure a top-down company 'buy-in' - based upon a realisation of the need and the benefits of investment (rather than 'cost') in this field.
- Identify and engage the key players who can provide leadership, coordination and an executive function.
- Involve the Trade Unions and men, themselves, from the beginning.
- Recognise that this is a long-term project (at least 3-5 years), and is developmental and progressional in nature.
- Put the project onto the agenda of every senior management team meeting - to remind everyone of its existence and progress.

- Develop an identity / brand (e.g. Male Minder or Kick Start) - to make it real and unique.
- Start with the most immediate need and build upon any successes. Pick 'winnable battles' and do things in bite-sized chunks.
- Get connected to anyone / everyone who may be able to inform developments (e.g. Frank Reilly in An Post).
- Research, detail, and test interest in a menu of possible activities / projects / outputs / options. Rank these according to feedback and feasibility.
- Identify up to five main priorities for action over the next 3-5 years - it might be best to start with the broad (e.g. a generic men's health booklet) and move towards the specific (e.g. mental health needs).
- Work towards a launch of the first product during Men's Health Week 2012.

5. MHFI Input

- Noel will forward copies of documents which might help with the process of pulling together the business case for this project (including the An Post documentation).
- Colin will add both John and Niall to the MHFI mailing database - to receive the E-Male Matters newsletter and notification of forthcoming events (including the Stormont networking event on Tuesday 27th September 2011).
- Noel will make an introductory call to Frank Reilly to make him aware of this project.
- MHFI would be happy to be involved in the development / testing of materials for a booklet (or other initiative), but there would be a cost involved.

6. Miscellaneous

Other companies have expressed an interest in being partners / learning from Eircom's experience. These include: ESB, Bord Gáis, Dublin City Council, Meath County Council, and Siemens. Together they represent approximately 60,000 workers.