

# E-Male Matters

Spring 2024

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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## News

### The Big Countdown Begins

Research clearly shows that men on the island of Ireland experience a disproportionate burden of ill-health and die too young. They: die younger than women; have higher death rates for almost all of the leading causes of death and at all ages; have poorer lifestyles which are responsible for a high proportion of chronic diseases; present later to health services which can lead to a large number of problems becoming untreatable ... However, this is not a lost cause. Much can be / is being done to improve this situation.

We're now only a few months away from [International Men's Health Week](#) (MHW), which begins on the Monday before Father's Day and end on Father's Day itself. This year, it will take place from Monday 10<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> June. This week is celebrated in many European countries, as well as in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada (and a number of other places worldwide), and offers a unique and ideal opportunity for everyone to do their bit to improve the health of men and boys by: heightening awareness of preventable health problems; supporting men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices / activities; and encouraging the early detection / treatment of health problems.

Each year, there is also a specific theme. During 2024, the theme for Ireland will be '**Know Your Numbers**' and the key message to everyone is '**men's health counts**'.

This is a population-wide attempt to increase awareness of the key numbers that policy makers / service providers / men / important people in men's lives need to know. Sometimes, these will relate to individual medical issues (e.g. blood pressure, heart rate, cholesterol level), but they also include key statistics on the state of men's health in Ireland, as well as the contact numbers for helpline and support services which are available.

Now's the time to start planning what you might do to mark this important occasion. A range of free resources will soon be made available. These include posters, postcards, social media content, graphics, an updated 'Action Man' manual, signposting tools etc. Keep up-to-date with developments at: <https://mhfi.org/mhw/about-mhw.html> and kick-off your MHW activity by sharing the countdown video clip at: <https://youtu.be/tySffvmZZ4>

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## Men's Health Guide

[Age NI's](#) 'Good Vibrations' programme recently launched their new health guide for men aged 50+ This offers simple, practical and realistic everyday choices that men can make to invest in their health and vitality in older age. View a copy of this booklet online at:

[https://issuu.com/age\\_ni/docs/age\\_ni\\_mens\\_health\\_guide\\_online](https://issuu.com/age_ni/docs/age_ni_mens_health_guide_online)

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## 'Talking Health and Wellbeing' Podcasts

The HSE ['Talking Health and Wellbeing'](#) podcasts have relaunched this year - with Senior Health Promotion and Improvement Officers, Dr Michelle Hardie-Murphy and Aisling Doherty, discussing ten tips to kick start 2024. They talk about setting realistic goals, the importance of enjoying healthy activities and celebrating small victories. Listen in at: <https://youtu.be/G-Bie708OLM>

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## Implications of Increased Alcohol Availability

On Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2024, more than 65 health, social and community organisations, academics and advocates came together to voice opposition to proposed measures in the Sale of Alcohol Bill that will dramatically increase the number of venues serving alcohol, as well as significantly extending the opening hours of pubs, bars and nightclubs in the Republic of Ireland. These bodies called on the Irish Government's Party Leaders for a health impact assessment on the Sale of Alcohol Bill. Find out more at:

<https://alcoholireland.ie/app/uploads/2024/02/Sale-of-Alcohol-Bill-open-letter-new.pdf>

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## Free Subscription to Grant Tracker

[NICVA](#) is pleased to announce that, thanks to funding from the Department for Communities, they can offer a limited number of free one-year subscriptions to 'Grant Tracker' - Northern Ireland's leading online fundraising toolkit. This could offer expert signposting to anyone based in the North who is seeking sources of financial support to underpin their work with men and boys. Find out more at: <https://www.nicva.org/article/funded-granttracker-one-year-subscriptions>

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## MindFit Toolkit

Have you seen the 'MindFit Toolkit' which seeks to help Canadian men to tackle chronic stress, anxiety and depression? ... If not, you might like to check out this resource at:

<https://menshealthfoundation.ca/mindfit-toolkit>

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## Deafblind UK - Supporting People with Sight and Hearing Loss

Did you know that there are 11,000 people in Northern Ireland who identify themselves as deafblind? ... [Deafblind UK](#) supports people who have any level of combined sight and hearing loss (as well as those around them) to live with their condition and to build their confidence and independence. They offer understanding, advice, practical help, residential support, care and social opportunities. This includes: a friendly helpline to answer questions and offer support; help with technology, so that everyone can stay connected; opportunities to socialise and make new friends; seaside holidays, so that participants can relax and unwind; wellbeing and emotional support for difficult times; care and support at home if needed. To learn more, visit: [www.deafblind.org.uk](http://www.deafblind.org.uk) You can also contact Deafblind UK via their free Helpline: 0800 132 320 | Text: 07903 572885 | Email: [info@deafblind.org.uk](mailto:info@deafblind.org.uk) | Text Relay: 18001 then 0800 132320 | BSL Video Relay: [deafblind.org.uk/bsl](http://deafblind.org.uk/bsl)

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## Events

### SunSmart for Outdoor Workers

The [National Cancer Control Programme](#) is hosting an in-person event for outdoor worker organisations and those who work with outdoor workers. The event will look at how to adopt comprehensive approaches to sun protection for employees and reduce skin cancer rates in the outdoor worker industry. This will take place on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024, from 11.00am to 1.00pm. To register for a place, visit: <https://form.jotform.com/240454829791365>

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### Healthy Living for a Healthy Life

The [Department of Preventive Medicine and Health Promotion](#) at St. Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin, invites you to a free event titled: 'Healthy Living for a Healthy Life'. This will take place on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024, from 10.00am to 2.00pm, on the 1st Floor, ADCC, St. Vincent's University Hospital, Elm Park, Dublin. This Health Fair is a marketplace style event which will provide an opportunity for people to meet, and get information from, health professionals on a wide range of topics. There will be over 25 display stands, representing hospital departments and external organisations.

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### Men's Health Symposium

In November 2023, [University College Cork](#) hosted a symposium on men's health. Watch this short video clip to get a sense of what they covered:

<https://media.heanet.ie/page/cb36ab218da8423db6a59dbce68dff94>

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### Travellers Together Transforming Conflict

This conference - in Dublin on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April 2024 - will give advocates, policy makers, service providers and members of the community an opportunity to come together to explore how inter-family conflict, and its impact on Traveller mental health, can be addressed and transformed. To find out more, visit: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/travellers-together-transforming-conflict-conference-tickets-847078242827>

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## Training

### Let's Talk About Suicide

'Let's Talk About Suicide' is a new free online suicide prevention training programme that helps people to develop their skills to keep others safe. It assists participants to: identify people who are at risk; confidently ask about the topic of suicide; and connect them with resources that can help them to stay safe. The programme was developed by the HSE's [National Office for Suicide Prevention](#) (NOSP), and is available to anyone over 18 years of age. It uses a mix of guided online content, video and interactive questions. Participants can pause and recommence the programme at their own convenience. On average, the programme takes 60 minutes to complete, but participants can work at their own pace. Find out how to access it at: <https://traininghub.nosp.ie>

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### Young Men's Rites of Passage

Young Men's Rites of Passage (YMROP) is an international event that has seen the participation of thousands of young men. This year, [Males Ireland](#) is hosting the event for the first time in Ireland. YMROP is a transformative experience that will resonate deeply with young men (aged 18-28 years) seeking to grow into the most authentic versions of themselves. The event is non-profit and is organised by a dedicated team of male volunteers. It will take place from Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2024 in Kiltegan, Co. Wicklow. For more information about this retreat, visit: <https://youngmensritesireland.ie>

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## Research

### How're You Doing Man?

Congratulations to everyone in [Insight Inishowen](#) on the official launch of 'How're You Doing Man?' in January 2024. This report, by Ruth Garvey-Williams and Margaret McLafferty, highlights the findings from research conducted into men's mental health in Donegal. The aim of this research was to listen to local men to find out their views, experiences and opinions about mental health, and the services and supports that are available to them. By conducting both quantitative and qualitative research, the team were able to build up a picture of some of the key issues that are emerging across the county. They also listened to women's concerns about their male loved ones. See a copy of the report at:

<https://mhfi.org/InishowenMentalHealth.pdf>

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### The Man Box 2024

This second edition of 'The Man Box' is a comprehensive study that focuses on the attitudes to manhood and the behaviours of Australian men aged 18 to 45. Download the report, executive summary and additional fact sheets at: <https://jss.org.au/programs/research/the-man-box>

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### Older Men and Loneliness

Research into men and masculinities suggests that men may be more reluctant than women to state they are lonely, more reliant on partners and/or alcohol to tackle it, and that this may be a result of poorer social relationships. This study tests hypotheses on sex differences in loneliness among older England-based men and women. Find out more at:

<https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-024-17892-5>

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## State of Caring Survey

Every two years, Family Carers Ireland conducts the 'State of Caring' survey - a comprehensive study to better understand the lives and experiences of family members who are currently providing care. Previous reports have highlighted the impact of being a carer, and provided evidence for submissions to decision makers and policy makers. The 2024 survey has now been launched, and they are eager to have input from a broad range of carers - especially men. The survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete, and can be found at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/StateOfCaring2024> If you know of any carers who would prefer a paper copy of the survey, or who would like some support with completing it, please direct them to Joanne Murphy at Tel: 086 0326187 or Email: [jmurphy@familycarers.ie](mailto:jmurphy@familycarers.ie)

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## Masculine Ideals and Health in Older Men

Masculine identity upholds beliefs about masculine enactment. These beliefs can be detrimental to men, and can lead to behaviours that put undue stress on them. This study examines how masculine ideals are associated with health and depressive symptomatology in older men. Read more at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/15579883231220714>

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## Web Links

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

[Postnatal mental health: new fathers encouraged to seek support](#)

[More adolescent boys have eating disorders - two experts discuss why](#)

[Erectile dysfunction drugs linked to reduced Alzheimer's risk](#)

[Male menopause symptoms and treatments](#)

[How does social media influence gender norms among adolescent boys?](#)

[New report suggests odds of gambling stacked against 16-year-old boys in Ireland](#)

[Age NI launches 'Good Vibrations' to support mental health of older men](#)

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## Next Edition

Do you know of anything (research, events, resources, training, news etc.) affecting men and boys which should be included in the next edition of 'E-Male Matters'? ...

Anyone can propose an article for inclusion in this newsletter - so long as it is of relevance to males, does not promote a commercial enterprise / product, and does not insult anyone.

There's a simple format for all articles. Let us know (within one paragraph and no more than 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)

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**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**