

# E-Male Matters

Autumn 2024

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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## News

### Free 'Action Man' Manuals

There's no denying that the state of men's health on the island of Ireland is often poor. However, there are things which can be done to change this situation and men, themselves, can play a key role in doing this. 'Action Man - ten top tips for men's health' is a free Man Manual which explains: (i) WHY an action is needed; (ii) WHAT can be done about it; and (iii) HOW to find support if you need it. Check it out at: [www.mhfi.org/ActionMan.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/ActionMan.pdf)

To mark International Men's Day (19<sup>th</sup> November) 2024, a new print run of this publication (supported by [Healthy Ireland](#) within Department of Health and [MHFI](#)) is being undertaken, and you are invited to request copies. If you require large quantities (50+ copies), or you are based in Northern Ireland, send an email to [menshealthweek@mhfi.org](mailto:menshealthweek@mhfi.org) stating:

- How many copies you would like.
- The name of the person to send them to.
- The full postal address (including a Postcode / Eircode) for delivery.
- A contact phone number (in case there is a problem with the delivery).

If you are based in the Republic of Ireland, and require 50 copies or less, these can be ordered via the [HealthPromotion.ie](https://www.healthpromotion.ie) website [register for an account, search for Action Man in the keyword box, and place your order].

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### **Take a Moment. Start a Conversation.**

The [Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland](https://www.mentalhealthchampion-ni.org.uk), Prof Siobhan O'Neill, recently launched a campaign titled '*Take a Moment. Start a Conversation*'. This focuses on how simple conversations can interrupt cycles of distressing thoughts; encourages people to talk to anyone who they might be worried about; and recognises that although connecting with someone who is experiencing a mental health crisis can be difficult, starting the conversation can make a real difference. There is evidence that small, everyday, caring conversations can interrupt overwhelming negative thoughts, and make a meaningful difference for people who feel suicidal. See: <https://www.mentalhealthchampion-ni.org.uk/take-a-moment>

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### **Male Testicular Health and Fertility Animations**

Have you seen the [British Fertility Society's](https://www.britishfertilitysociety.org.uk) short evidenced-based animations on male testicular health and fertility? These target young men aged 14-24 years, and the four clips explore: the two essential jobs your testicles do for you; healthy balls healthy body; how you can tell if your testicles are healthy; the incredibly obvious thing you should do about painful testicles. You can check them out at: <https://www.britishfertilitysociety.org.uk/fei/videos>

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### **Mental Health in the Workplace**

It's time to prioritise mental health in the workplace! To find out how, and get practical tips, visit: <https://westerntrust.pagetiger.com/wspdwmd-campaign-pack-2024>

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### **Better Out Than In**

Growing up can be tough, and being LGBTQ+ can bring even more challenges. Taking the brave step of opening up to someone about your worries and fears, no matter how big or small, is worth it. If you're struggling, the most important thing that you can do is to reach out for help and support - feelings are always better out than in. Start by visiting:

<https://www.belongto.org/support-for-me/better-out-than-in>

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### **Focus on Fatherhood Podcast**

Have you listened to the 'Focus on Fatherhood' podcast yet? This is part of the [HSE's Talking Health and Wellbeing](https://www.hse.ie/eng/healthandwellbeing) series of recordings. In this episode, Fergal Fox and guest Shane Lynch discuss the crucial role of fatherhood. Shane shares insights from his work at Deansrath Family Centre. Listen in at: <https://www.podbean.com/media/share/pb-fter6-163b57d>

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### **Youth Prevention Toolkit: E-Cigarettes**

The [Tobacco Free Ireland Programme](https://www.tobaccofreeireland.com) recently produced a new resource for youth workers: '*Youth Prevention Toolkit: E-Cigarettes*'. The purpose of the Toolkit is to offer current and precise information about e-cigarettes and other nicotine delivery systems to individuals who interact with young people. It includes explanations about these devices, their health effects, environmental impact, concerns about young people vaping, and strategies for discussing the issue with young people. Find out more at: <https://hsehealthandwellbeingnews.com/new-e-cigarette-prevention-toolkit-for-youth-workers>

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## Know the Signs of Lung Cancer

Did you know that over 2,500 cases of lung cancer are diagnosed each year in the Republic of Ireland, and that lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer mortality in Ireland (with over 1,900 deaths annually)? However, if lung cancer is found early, it's easier to treat and there's a better chance of recovery. One of the common symptoms of lung cancer is a persistent new cough, and everyone is advised to contact their doctor without delay if they develop a cough that does not go away after three weeks. Know the signs and find out more at:

[www.hse.ie/checkthatcough](http://www.hse.ie/checkthatcough)

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## Action Mental Health in Lisburn - Supporting Men in Recovery to Take their Next Steps

Are you looking for one-to-one support in a relaxed and friendly environment? Do you want to build your skills and confidence for the future? ... If so, Action Mental Health in Lisburn is here to help. Your dedicated keyworker can support and guide you to develop your skills, gain work experience / volunteer, access education / training and find employment. They offer a range of courses (including literacy, numeracy and computer skills, health and safety, and food hygiene qualifications), help with CV building, job applications, interview preparation skills, education advice and guidance, improving confidence, stress management and much more. If you wish to find out more about the SkillSET Project, contact: Andrea (02890 490722 | [awarwick@amh.org.uk](mailto:awarwick@amh.org.uk)) or Francesco (02890 490721 | [fpetronio@amh.org.uk](mailto:fpetronio@amh.org.uk)), or visit them at 21c Railway Street, Lisburn, BT28 1XG for a cup of tea and a chat.

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## Information Sheets for Parents of Young Males

The [Partnership for Male Youth](#) has produced a series of information sheets for parents focusing upon: supporting your son's sexual and reproductive health; understanding adolescent male sexuality and health risks; understanding gender from birth through adolescence; understanding boys and pornography. You can view these at:

<https://www.partnershipformale youth.org/for-parents.html>

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## HSE Health and Wellbeing Annual Report 2023

The HSE Health and Wellbeing Annual Report for 2023 is now available. This report outlines the key activities that [HSE Health and Wellbeing](#) delivered both nationally and locally last year, with insights shared from across their policy areas, partners and various work streams. View and download a copy at: <https://publuu.com/flip-book/647102/1465321>

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## Youth Mental Health Signposting Tool

Have you seen the [National Youth Council of Ireland's 'Youth Mental Health Signposting Tool'](#)? This offers young people, parents, caregivers and those working with young people, reliable up-to-date information on where to access supports and services - at both a local and national level - for a variety of mental health issues. Check it out at:

<https://www.youth.ie/programmes/youth-health/youth-mental-health-signposting-tool>

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## How's the Form?

'How's the Form?' is a new podcast series from [Age NI](#) aimed at men aged 50+. Hosted by Joe Lindsay, this podcast speaks to some of Northern Ireland's most high profile men about life in their later years. Every episode also contains advice from a GP and a psychotherapist looking at how to keep your body and your mind fit beyond 50. Catch-up on all the episodes at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZgroTgDNfICgFlz9Olqt5z8IR71ia0ea>

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## HUGG for Men

Did you know that [HUGG](#) - which provides support to suicide bereaved adults in Ireland - launched a new men's group during the Summer? Find out more about this at:

<https://www.hugg.ie/news/hugg-men-suicide-bereavement-support-group-led-by-men-for-men>  
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## Events

### Walk and Talk in Belfast

[Belfast Men's Health Group](#) invites you to join them on a men's 'Walk and Talk' event to mark International Men's Day on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2024. This will begin at 11.00am from the Forthspring Community Centre on the Springfield Road in Belfast, and will also include lunch, alternative therapies and a range of health activities. Register for a place at:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/international-mens-health-day-mens-walk-and-talk-event-tickets-1041887161547>

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### Annual Regional Sexual Health Conference for Northern Ireland

The Sexual Health Training Team invites you to the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Regional Sexual Health Conference for Northern Ireland. This event offers the opportunity for everyone with an interest and/or role in the area of sexual health and wellbeing to network, share, and learn more about the current challenges, recent successes and future opportunities to improve the sexual health and wellbeing of the population. This full day event will take place on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024, and will be held in Lisburn City. For more information, email:

[shealth.team@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:shealth.team@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

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### Exercise and Healthy Ageing Webinar

The [Institute of Public Health](#) (IPH) invites you to attend a free webinar titled 'Exercise and Healthy Ageing' on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2024. This will focus on the role of physical activity in preventing, delaying or reversing frailty. This webinar runs from 10.00am to Noon, and will include presentations from Professor Maria Fiatarone Singh (University of Sydney), Dr John Travers (Trinity College Dublin) and Alison Patterson (Public Health Agency). Professor Roger O'Sullivan (IPH) will also chair a panel discussion / Q&A, with contributions from Leila Beattie (Age and Opportunity), Dr Ruth McCullagh (University College Cork), George Bell (Frailty Network) and Professor Roman Romero Ortuno (Trinity College Dublin). Book a place at:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_HZG1svWLT0yAbVJpejvPWA#/registration](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HZG1svWLT0yAbVJpejvPWA#/registration)

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### Finding Hope and Healing after Suicide

[HUGG](#) invites you to register for a place on their free information event for anyone who has been bereaved by suicide, or who is supporting someone bereaved by suicide. This will take place online (via Zoom) on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at 7.30pm. Find out more and book a place at: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/finding-hope-and-healing-after-suicide-tickets-1037729375497>

[1037729375497](#)

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### Reducing Alcohol Harm in Northern Ireland: The Potential of Minimum Unit Pricing

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2024, the [Institute of Public Health](#) hosted an event at Stormont in Belfast to explore the potential for Minimum Unit Pricing (MUP) in Northern Ireland. This event highlighted the levels of alcohol harm locally, and demonstrated how MUP could be a critical

tool in saving lives and reducing harm. The discussions offered valuable perspectives on the intersection of public health policy, research, and real-world application. You can see a recording of proceedings at: <https://youtu.be/TXfPWhQxtg8>

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### **Student Mental Health Conference**

The [Union of Students in Ireland](#) (USI) is hoping to convene a student mental health conference on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November 2024 in Dublin. This one day event will provide an opportunity to learn from those who are working innovatively in the student mental health space and to network with one another, as well as to hear from those doing research in this area. They are trying to ascertain the level of interest in such an event, in order to plan accordingly. You can register your interest at: <https://tinyurl.com/4jxnp53r>

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## Training

### **Free Suicide Prevention Workshops for Construction Sites**

Suicide and mental health difficulties are prevalent issues within the construction industry in the Republic of Ireland. Would your building site like to host free General Awareness Training (GAT) workshops which focus upon reducing suicide and mental health stigma, increasing mental health understanding, and fostering help-seeking and help-offering behaviours among site workers? ... The [CAIRDE](#) GAT workshop draws upon the latest statistics and evidence-based practices relevant to mental health promotion in the construction sector. Participants will gain the tools and insights to better understand mental health for both for themselves and their peers. Each workshop is free, lasts for approximately 90 minutes, and is delivered by trained GAT facilitators. Expressions of interest are being sought from construction sites who are able to host 2-3 workshops (on the same day) in October / November / early December 2024. Please note that, at the moment, the CAIRDE team can only offer a handful of these opportunities, and it is expected that the available slots will fill up very quickly. If you are interested in finding out more, contact Jack Sweeney via Mobile: 083 8262487 | Email: [C00277225@setu.ie](mailto:C00277225@setu.ie)

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### **Let's Talk About Suicide**

'*Let's Talk About Suicide*' is a 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 60-90 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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### **Parent and Baby Workshop for Dads**

[AWARE NI](#) is offering a free mental health focused parent and baby workshop for dads. This will take place on International Men's Day (Tuesday 19th November 2024), via Zoom, from 7.00pm - 9.00pm. To find out more, or book a place, visit: <https://aware-ni.org/MMPB>

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## **Suicide and Male Construction Workers in Ireland**

Suicide among male construction workers is reported to be disproportionately high compared to the working age population. However, there is minimal understanding globally of the prevalence and associated factors for suicidal ideation, non-suicidal self-injury, and suicide attempt among this occupational group. A journal article titled '*Prevalence and associated risk factors for suicidal ideation, non-suicidal self-injury and suicide attempt among male construction workers in Ireland*' attempts to shine some light on this area. Download a copy of it at: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12889-024-18483-0>

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## **The Representation of Men in Regional / Global Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy**

The [Global Action on Men's Health](#) (GAMH) report, '*Out of Focus: The representation of men in regional and global sexual and reproductive health policy*', was published on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2024 (World Sexual Health Day). This shows that men's sexual and reproductive health is, in many respects, poor. For example, men are more likely than women to acquire sexually transmitted infections such as syphilis and gonorrhoea or to be infected by HIV, sperm counts are falling globally, and male sexual dysfunctions - such as erectile dysfunction - are becoming more prevalent. Men are also often reluctant users of services; partly because of gender norms that inhibit help-seeking, but also because services are not geared towards their needs. You can download a copy of the report at: <https://tinyurl.com/y2brar69>

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## **Workplace Interventions Targeting Mental Health Literacy, Stigma, Help-Seeking and Help-Offering in Male-Dominated Industries: A Systematic Review**

Mental ill-health and suicide represent a significant proportion of the burden of global disease among men. Connell's relational theory of masculinities provides a useful framework to explore how mental health literacy, mental health stigma, and delayed help-seeking and help-offering behaviours are associated with mental ill-health among men - particularly within male-dominated industries. To address the high incidences of mental ill-health in male-dominated industries, several workplace interventions targeting these outcomes have been implemented. However, no review, to date, has examined the current state of evidence for these interventions or identified the behaviour change techniques used. This article explores this issue. See: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/15579883241236223>

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## **Help to Shape the Treoir Strategic Plan for Parent Support**

[Treoir](#) provides a free, confidential, specialist information service for parents in the Republic of Ireland who are not married to each other (whether living together or apart), their extended families and those working with them. Information is available on legal, social welfare and parenting issues. They are seeking help to inform their new Strategic Plan, by participating in a short survey. See more at: <https://tinyurl.com/mre9ezmj>

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## **The Real Face of Men's Health**

In July 2024, [Movember](#) launched a report on men's health in the UK titled '*The Real Face of Men's Health*'. The aim of this report was to elevate the profile of men's health with policymakers, so that it is considered proportionally to the burden of disease experienced by men, and to build political will for greater policy action and resourcing for men's health. You can download the report at: <https://tinyurl.com/354nsdzm>

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## Cash Incentives Drive Weight Loss in Men

A major UK study, led by health experts at the University of Stirling, has found that offering financial incentives is effective in helping men to lose weight. 585 men living with obesity across Scotland, England and Northern Ireland took part in the research, and were randomly split into three groups. One received daily supportive text messages plus the opportunity to earn £400 for meeting weight loss goals, the second received only text messages, and the third received no extra support or financial incentive. The men were given targets of 5% weight loss at three months, 10% at six months and maintain 10% weight loss at 12 months - at which point the cash was paid to the group offered the monetary incentive. The research found that, after one year, the men receiving both text messages and the opportunity to get cash lost the most weight. Read more at: <https://www.stir.ac.uk/news/2024/may-2024-news/cash-incentives-drive-weight-loss-in-men>

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## Web Links

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

[Farmers urged to seek support for stress and mental health issues](#)

[The state of working class men](#)

[Supporting fathers' mental health in the perinatal period](#)

[Alcohol taxes must increase, for good of our nation's health](#)

[6 reasons why men don't get mental health care when they need it](#)

[Microplastic discovery in penises raises erectile dysfunction questions](#)

[Irish rugby legend urges men to look after their mental and physical health](#)

[Study finds men more at risk of complications from diabetes](#)

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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 a 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