

# E-Male Matters

*January and February 2020*

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

## Quick links to articles in this edition ...

### NEWS

['Get the Balance Right' - Men's Health Week 2020](#)  
['Biz in the Pris'](#)  
[Sports Students as Mentors for Boys / Young Men](#)

### EVENTS

[deMENTia - Men in the Middle](#)  
[Domestic Violence and Abuse - What About Men?](#)  
[Men's Health World Congress 2020](#)  
[Adolescent Mental Health Resilience](#)  
['United as One' Conferences](#)

### WEB LINKS

[Men's Issues on the Web](#)

### TRAINING

[Connecting with Young Men Workshop in Ardee](#)  
[Become Suicide Alert](#)  
[Hands for Life](#)  
[Men in the Middle Workshops](#)

### RESEARCH

[Following Young Fathers Further](#)  
[Mental Health and Wellbeing at Work](#)  
[Northern Ireland Childcare Survey 2020](#)  
[Health in Ireland - Key Trends 2019](#)  
[Health Survey \(NI\): First Results 2018/19](#)

### NEXT EDITION

[Submit an Article for the Next Issue](#)

## News

### 'Get the Balance Right' - Men's Health Week 2020

[International Men's Health Week](#) (MHW) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. This coming year, it will run from **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> until Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020**.

Since November 2019, an all-island Planning Group for MHW (convened by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland) has been meeting and corresponding to finalise the call to action and to develop resources for the week. A lot has been achieved.

This year, MHW on the island of Ireland will focus upon *'getting the balance right'*. This could mean work ~ life balance, or eating healthily ~ indulging in junk food, or exercising ~ slobbing around, or time spent online ~ offline or ... It's a very general theme which everyone can adapt for their own group, organisation, workplace, church or club.

Make sure that you have the dates in your diary and are thinking about how you might do something to mark this week. It's never too early to start planning. To support this, you will soon be able to order / access posters, postcards, Man Manuals, a pool of social media messages, ideas for activities etc. Have a look at what was on offer last year to give you an idea of what is possible: <https://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2019.html>

[Back to Top](#)

## **'Biz in the Pris'**

A very original and creative health initiative took place in Hydebank Wood Secure College and Women's Prison last year that was co-designed and produced with people who live in custody. As a result, it was decided to create a comic book that addresses health and wellbeing issues in prison. A multi-disciplinary Steering Group was set up, involving people who work and live in secure establishments. It was agreed that the first edition would focus on addiction - as this is a major issue in these settings. A series of workshops was arranged with staff and service users to brainstorm ideas, artwork and story boards for the comic. Crucial to this, was the involvement of a person who had previous lived experience of prison and is a volunteer artist for the Prison Arts Foundation. Those in custody took the lead on character development, storytelling, artwork and, most importantly, relevant language. The comic book focuses on the character 'Diaze - Man' who is addicted to prescription medication and his fight with his drug enemies - the Zolpidem Zombie King, Budzilla, Opioid Ogre and others. He gets help from people who work in prison to overcome his enemies, and turns into 'Mentor Man', who is able to help others. The comic was launched in November 2019, and work on the second edition begins in April 2020. It also won the Public Health Agency's Involve Fest Chairman's Award 2019/20 for Best Community and Voluntary Initiative. View a copy of it at:

<https://www.mhfi.org/BizInPris.pdf>

[Back to Top](#)

## **Sports Students as Mentors for Boys and Young Men Resources**

The Sports Students as Mentors for Boys and Young Men (SSaMs) project aims to improve boys' and young men's educational attainment and prevent early school leaving via an innovative approach which mixes gender-sensitive mentoring and sports. The project recently launched a range of resources for both students and those who train them. These can be accessed at: <https://sportsmentors.eu/resources>

[Back to Top](#)

# Events

## **deMENTia - Men in the Middle**

The Southern Area Men's Health Group invites you to join them at their free Annual Men's Health Seminar which will take place on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2020, from 9.30am - 2.00pm, in Tandragee Recreation Centre, Tandragee, Co. Armagh. This year, the focus is upon '*deMENTia - Men in the Middle*', and the programme will look at things such as: what is dementia; how does dementia impact upon men as sufferers, carers and family members; practical things to help support people with dementia; where / how to find help in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area. Places must be booked in advance, and lunch and refreshments will be provided on the day. If you are interested in attending, contact Donna by Email: [donna@youthaction.org](mailto:donna@youthaction.org) or Telephone: 028 37511624.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Domestic Violence and Abuse - What About Men?**

You are invited to apply for a place on a free event titled: '*Domestic Violence and Abuse - What About Men?*' This will take place on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March, from 1.30pm to 3.00pm, in Training Room 2, Downshire Hospital, Ardglass Road, Downpatrick. It will explore: the nature and extent of domestic abuse perpetrated against men; types, indicators and impact of abuse; barriers to seeking help; and services available to male victims. This event is open to anyone working in the statutory, voluntary or community sectors. To book a place, Email:

[patricia.mcmurray@setrust.hscni.net](mailto:patricia.mcmurray@setrust.hscni.net)

[Back to Top](#)

## Men's Health World Congress 2020

A Men's Health World Congress will be held in Malaysia from 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> July 2020, and the organisers have developed a broad-based programme. Full details can be found at:

<https://www.mhwc.my>

[Back to Top](#)

## Adolescent Mental Health Resilience After Childhood Adversity

The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH) invites you to a free talk on '*Adolescent Mental Health Resilience After Childhood Adversity*'. This will be held on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, from 2.00pm - 4.00pm, in the O'Flanagan Lecture Theatre, Royal College of Surgeons Ireland, York Street, St Stephens Green, Dublin 2. In this talk, the speaker (Dr Anne-Laura van Harmelen) will argue that resilient functioning is not facilitated by any single 'resilience biomarker', but is a product of complex processes and influences across multiple levels; ranging from 'bottom-up' neurobiological influences, to 'top-down' supportive social influences. This event is being organised by ACAMH's Early Intervention in Youth Mental Health Special Interest Group, and is co-hosted by the Youth and Student Mental Health Special Interest Group of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland. Book a place at:

<https://www.acamh.org/event/ei-sig>

[Back to Top](#)

## 'United as One' Conferences

The [La Dolce Vita Project](#), in association with [Parental Alienation Europe](#), will be hosting two 'United As One' conferences on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020 in Croke Park, Dublin, and in The City Hotel, Derry/Londonderry on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020. Both conferences will focus upon the issue of parental alienation and are suitable for professionals (including psychotherapists, social workers, psychiatrists, counsellors, barristers, solicitors, guardians of court, family support workers) and anyone working with those impacted by domestic abuse, violence and parental alienation. More details are available at: <https://parentalalienation.eu/parental-alienation-conferences-2020-dublin-and-derry/> The petition to make Parental Alienation a crime in Ireland is also gathering support at: <http://bit.ly/PA-petition>

[Back to Top](#)

# Training

## 'Connecting with Young Men' Workshop in Ardee, Co. Louth

You are invited to apply for a place on a '*Connecting with Young Men*' workshop. This free event will take place on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020, from 9.30am to 4.00pm, in the Regional Education Centre, Ardee, Co. Louth. The aim of this workshop is to assist a broad range of practitioners to effectively connect with young men on mental health and wellbeing issues. It focuses on the engagement process (i.e. WHY and HOW to build relationships with young men) and seeks to: demonstrate why we need to work with young men as a specific group; help participants to reflect on their own value base, experience, attitudes towards, and expectations of young men; explore the world of young men, the issues that they face and opportunities that exist to engage with them; consider the practicalities of 'what works'; increase the confidence of participants in relation to working with young men. To apply for a place, or for further information, contact Carol Farrelly at Tel: 041 9875292 | Email: [carol.farrelly@hse.ie](mailto:carol.farrelly@hse.ie)

[Back to Top](#)

## **Become Suicide Alert**

The South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT) invite you to learn four basic steps to recognise persons with thoughts of suicide and to connect them with support. Most people with thoughts of suicide invite help. Often these opportunities are missed, dismissed or avoided - leaving people more alone and at greater risk. SafeTALK training prepares you to help by using TALK (Tell, Ask, Listen and Keep Safe) to identify and engage people with thoughts of suicide and to connect them with further help and care. This free training is for anyone who wants to help prevent suicide. Sessions will take place on: Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2020 (Cloona House); Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020 (Ards Community Network); and Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 (Downshire Hospital). All sessions run from 9.30am - 12.30pm. To book a place or for more information, contact: Eileen Young at Email: [Eileen.Young@setrust.hscni.net](mailto:Eileen.Young@setrust.hscni.net) or Tel: 02891 510181.

[Back to Top](#)

## **Hands for Life**

Every day in Ireland, 13 people die from a cardiac arrest. If your work colleague, family member or friend suddenly collapsed, would you know what to do? The [Irish Heart Foundation](#) is on a mission to train a nation of life savers and, through their Hands for Life programme, is offering free CPR training in communities and workplaces across Ireland for adults aged 18 years and over. Find out more at: <https://irishheart.ie/courses/hands-for-life>

[Back to Top](#)

## **Men in the Middle Workshops**

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. MHFI is currently looking for groups who would like to host this free workshop for their staff / volunteers / activists. For more details, see: <https://www.mhfi.org/EngageUnit7Workshop.pdf>

[Back to Top](#)

# Research

## **Following Young Fathers Further**

Existing research confirms that in professional settings - including maternity, child and family support services - negative assumptions about young fathers are pervasive and translate into practices of surveillance or side-lining by practitioners (Neale & Davies, 2015). Such practices exclude them from dominant expectations of 'engaged fatherhood' (Miller, 2011); despite the proven societal and wide-ranging benefits of men's involvement in caregiving for children, mothers and fathers. 'Following Young Fathers Further' is a four-year qualitative longitudinal study which explores the parenting trajectories and support needs of young fathers (aged 25 and under). Find out more at: <https://fyff.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk>

[Back to Top](#)

## **Mental Health and Wellbeing at Work**

At a time of increasing demands upon all who work in delivering health and wellbeing support services to the public, it is vitally important that our own mental health and wellbeing is resilient enough to meet the pressures placed upon us. To gain a snapshot of the current state of mental health and wellbeing in the support sector - and as an aid to further dialogue on how we might do it differently - Men's Action Network (as part of the ELEVATE programme) invites you take part in a short survey. The aim of this is for you to pause for a few minutes to consider the impact that your work has on you and on your life outside of work. Find out more at:

<https://s.surveyplanet.com/rMc09J> |

[Back to Top](#)

## **Northern Ireland Childcare Survey 2020**

Employers for Childcare's Northern Ireland Childcare Survey 2020 is now open. With the restoration of the Executive, and childcare a key priority, it is a really important time for parents and childcare providers to share their experience of providing, accessing and affording childcare. There are two surveys, one for parents and one for childcare providers. Each takes less than ten minutes to complete. Now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, this Childcare Survey is a vital source of information for policy makers, and ensures that a broad range of voices are heard in the campaign to have an accessible, high quality and affordable childcare infrastructure that meets the needs of children, parents and childcare providers. The input of fathers would be particularly welcome. Parents will have the chance to win an overnight stay at the luxury Galgorm Resort and Spa in Co. Antrim [by completing the Parent survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2020childcaresurvey>]. Childcare providers will be in with a chance to win a £100 Boots voucher [by completing the childcare provider survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2020childcareprovider>].

[Back to Top](#)

## **Health in Ireland - Key Trends 2019**

In December 2019, the Department of Health in the Republic of Ireland published the 12<sup>th</sup> edition of 'Health in Ireland'. The 2019 edition of 'Health in Ireland: Key Trends' provides summary statistics on health and health care over the past ten years. It highlights selected trends and topics, and includes data from newly available sources. There are also several tables and graphs comparing Ireland with other countries in the EU or the OECD - to provide context for national performance and to assess progress. The booklet is divided into seven chapters, covering topics from population growth, life expectancy and health status, to profiles of the new regional health areas. A copy can be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/f1bb64-health-in-ireland-key-trends-2019>

[Back to Top](#)

## **Health Survey (NI): First Results 2018/19**

The Department of Health in Northern Ireland recently published 'Health Survey (NI): First Results 2018/19'. This survey runs on an annual basis, and covers a range of health topics that are important to the lives of people in Northern Ireland. The fieldwork was conducted from April 2018 to March 2019, and data were collected using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) and, where appropriate, Computer Assisted Self-Interviewing (CASI), from those aged 16 and over in private households. 3,593 interviews were conducted. A copy of the report can be downloaded at: [https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/hsni-first-results-18-19\\_1.pdf](https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/hsni-first-results-18-19_1.pdf)

[Back to Top](#)

## Web Links

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

[We tell men to open up more. But are we ready to listen?](#)

[Maternity ward dads: Kick them out or welcome them in?](#)

[Changing face of men's mental health](#)

[Two-thirds of men in Ireland are overweight or obese, report finds](#)

[Thinking outside 'the box' on men's health](#)

[Ulster University researchers given £250k grant for pioneering prostate cancer work](#)

[Teachers take on mammoth sunrise to sunset challenge in aid of men's mental health](#)

[GHB is a killer, I know of eight men who died after taking it](#)

[Bereaved dads heal on the playing fields of Ireland](#)

['Traditional masculinity' and mental health: Experts call for gendered approach](#)

[Five facts about prostate cancer for the men of Ireland](#)

[Life expectancy has increased in Ireland](#)

[Man Down](#) [video]

[Back to Top](#)

## Next Edition

The next edition of 'E-Male Matters' will be released in April 2020. Do you know of anything (research, events, resources, news etc.) affecting men and boys which should be included in it? ...

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)

[Back to Top](#)

**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)**

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