

E-Male Matters

July and August 2020

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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News

COVID-19: Getting the Real News in Ireland

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called Coronavirus. This is spread in sneeze or cough droplets, and infects you via your eyes, nose or mouth. However, there's a lot of false information being circulated, so it's crucial to follow the official up-to-date guidance from the Health Service Executive in the Republic of Ireland (<https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus>) and the Public Health Agency in Northern Ireland (<https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus>). Everyone's lives and daily routines are affected by the measures that have been introduced to disrupt the spread of the virus, and keep us all safe. It's normal to be worried or to feel stressed during this difficult time, but there are many things we can do to help us mind our mental health and wellbeing. Start by checking out: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/together>

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Men and COVID-19

The Coronavirus / COVID-19 pandemic appears to be having a disproportionate impact upon men. While there is a broadly similar incidence and prevalence rate to women, men: are faster at developing serious illness; recover slower from the virus; and have a higher death rate. There is also a broad range of mental health and social impacts upon males and the wider community which are a cause for concern. To find out more about this situation, visit: www.mhfi.org/coronavirus.html

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COVID Tracker Apps

Both the [Health Service Executive](#) and the [Public Health Agency](#) now have free smartphone Apps to help us to protect each other and slow the spread of coronavirus. Find out more at: <https://covidtracker.gov.ie> [RoI] | <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/covid-19-coronavirus/testing-and-tracing-covid-19/stopcovid-ni-contact-tracing-app> [NI]

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Be Sun Smart

Although many people are not going abroad for a holiday this year due to COVID-19, it's worth remembering that the sun in Ireland can also cause a lot of skin damage. As the good weather encourages more people to be outside, there is an increasing need to be 'sun smart' - as skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in Ireland. You can find out how at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWMEL5OuesA> | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SSvudyajTyl>

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Free 'Challenges and Choices' Man Manual

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. During [Men's Health Week 2020](#), a free, 32 page, Man Manual (based upon the 'Haynes Manual' model) was distributed by the [Men's Health Forum in Ireland](#) (MHFI) to mark this week. This posed ten simple and practical health challenges to men and, to meet every challenge, it offered three choices. It helped men across the island of Ireland to start #RestoringTheBalance. Almost 15,000 hard copies of this manual were given out within a few weeks of its launch. However, electronic copies can still be downloaded from the MHFI website at: www.mhfi.org/challenges2020.pdf. The publication of this booklet was only possible because of the generous support given by the [Public Health Agency](#) in Northern Ireland, the Health Promotion and Improvement Department within the [Health Service Executive](#) in the Republic of Ireland, and the author - Dr Ian Banks.

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From the Margins to the Mainstream

During Men's Health Week 2020, [Global Action on Men's Health](#) (GAMH) launched a new report titled: *'From the Margins to the Mainstream: Advocating the inclusion of men's health in policy'*. This examines the policy response to men's health to date, the barriers to policy development, the currently-available opportunities and, most importantly, the policy priorities and the next steps necessary for their achievement through effective advocacy. Download a copy of the report at: <http://gamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/From-the-Margins-to-The-Mainstream-Report.pdf>

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Keeping Well at Home Booklet

Age Friendly Network NI and the Public Health Agency have produced a *'Keeping Well at Home'* booklet for older people who are self-isolating during COVID-19. This free resource is targeted at those who are unable to go outside, or have limited / no access to online resources. The booklet contains practical information on: home exercises; mental wellbeing; staying safe from scammers; safety in the home; nutrition and hydration; managing your energy supplies; and useful contacts. An electronic copy of this publication can be downloaded at:

www.makinglifebettertogether.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Keeping-Well-at-Home-July-2020.pdf and hard copies can be ordered from [AGE NI](#). Age NI has also teamed-up with Mary Peters to launch *'Move with Mary'* - an exercise programme aimed specifically at keeping older people moving during the extended Covid-19 period. Check it out at: www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZgroTqDNfIDglYTD44VfnFwP-sOUyr8T

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Sharing the Vision: A Mental Health Policy for Everyone

In mid-June 2020, the [Department of Health](#) in the Republic of Ireland launched ‘*Sharing the Vision*’ - as the successor to ‘*A Vision for Change*’. This carries forward those elements of the original policy that still have relevance in-light of expert opinion. It incorporates new recommendations to enhance national policy while, simultaneously, aligning with the ten-year vision for reform and transformation of Ireland’s health and social care services encapsulated in the Sláintecare report. Sharing the Vision focuses on developing a broad-based mental health policy for the whole of the population. A large-scale consultation process informed the recommendations in this policy, and it directly engaged a wide range of stakeholders, including people with personal experience, family members, community and voluntary sector groups and staff. Download this document at: <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/2e46f-sharing-the-vision-a-mental-health-policy-for-everyone>

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Events

HSE Obesity Summer School

On Thursday 27th August 2020, the HSE Obesity Management Clinical Programme is hosting the second annual Obesity Summer School - which will be held virtually this year. This online event is supported and hosted by the [HSE](#) and the [Royal College of Physicians of Ireland](#), and will combine public information seminars with a range of topics for health care professionals. The day will run from 10.00am - 2.30pm. Registration is free, and open to all people living with, or interested in, overweight and obesity - including members of the public, healthcare professionals and policy makers. Find out more / register at: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/hse-virtual-obesity-summer-school-2020-registration-114256068978>

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COVID Conversations - Men

Gender equality is a central component of any humanitarian development response. In the context of COVID-19, this is also the case. Women and men, boys and girls are all affected by COVID-19. Much of the commentary, to date, has focused on the impact upon women and the secondary consequences of COVID (such as domestic violence) upon them. However, men seem more prone to severe episodes of the disease, and are more likely to die than women. Men also work in some sectors of the economy (e.g. transport and construction) that might put them at a higher risk. On Friday 17th July 2020, the [Irish Global Health Network](#) and [ESTHER Alliance for Global Health Partnerships](#) ran a webinar focusing upon how men are affected by COVID-19 and how responses are addressing the particular needs of men. A recording of the proceedings can be watched at: <https://youtu.be/wlYabTOMKv0>

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Training

Master of Arts in Advanced Facilitation Skills for Promoting Health and Wellbeing

Do you want to become a highly skilled facilitator and advance within your chosen profession or seek new employment opportunities? ... If so, you might consider the Master of Arts in Advanced Facilitation Skills for Promoting Health and Wellbeing. This is an innovative practice-orientated programme; the only one of its kind nationally. It is designed to enhance personal growth and development, and to advance the knowledge, skills, attitudes and

competencies required for effective facilitation of health and wellbeing programmes with groups, individuals and key populations. This is a full time course, and its delivery reflects the flexibility required for adult learners. The programme is delivered in Dublin on one Friday and Saturday per month per semester, and via three residential weekends - dispersed across the three semesters from January 2021. For further information, check out www.wit.ie/wd591 or take a look at this short video https://youtu.be/PS4jHSm_yjs For all queries, please contact the course leaders by email at: PCarroll@wit.ie | MLBarry@wit.ie

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Research

Challenges Faced by Cancer Patients Returning to Work

Last year, the [Irish Cancer Society](#) (ICS) launched its '*Real Cost of Cancer*' report. This research highlighted the need to examine the barriers faced by those previously diagnosed with cancer who seek to return to work. ICS wants to hear from people with experience of this issue, in order to make recommendations for change and to develop best practices for both people returning to the workplace and their employers. An online questionnaire is open to anyone aged 18-65, who has been diagnosed with cancer in the last ten years, and who was in paid employment (including self-employment) at the time of their most recent diagnosis / episode. It takes about 15 minutes to complete. ICS is particularly keen to hear from men. You can participate at: www.cancer.ie/returningtowork

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How People are Coping During the Covid-19 Pandemic

The [Institute of Public Health in Ireland](#) is inviting you to take part in an online, anonymous, international survey to help understand how people are coping during the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey has been developed by the International Loneliness and Social Isolation Research Network (I-LINK) that includes the Institute of Public Health along with Ulster University, Trinity College Dublin and Maynooth University, as well as colleagues from the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. The study seeks to learn about the issues people are facing, and how they are managing with social distancing and changes to everyday life - so gaining valuable insights into life before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, including key challenges and coping strategies. If you would be willing to participate in this survey, visit: <https://bit.ly/36PxDg1>

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Evidence for a Causal Role by Human Papillomaviruses in Prostate Cancer

The authors of this systematic review hypothesise that high risk for cancer human papillomaviruses (HPVs) have a causal role in prostate cancer. Although HPVs are only one of many pathogens that have been identified in prostate cancer, they are the only infectious pathogen which can be prevented by vaccination. Hence the importance of assessing the evidence: <https://infectedagentscancer.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13027-020-00305-8>

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Overweight Men's Experiences of a Sport-Based Weight Loss Intervention for Men

In Western countries, a significantly greater proportion of men (relative to women) are overweight and obese. Despite this, relatively few weight loss interventions have been developed that target men. This lack of male-focused initiatives may be because 'traditional' weight loss programmes are unappealing to, what is considered, a 'hard-to-reach' population. However, one programme that appears to appeal to men is the 'MAN v FAT' football

programme in the United Kingdom. This encourages men's participation in a community-based intervention that incentivises weight loss through participation in a football league and, since 2016, has supported the weight loss efforts of several thousand men. Read more at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7324325>

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LGBTI+ Life in Lockdown: Key Findings

Although young people are estimated to have the lowest mortality rates from COVID-19, they are not immune to its consequences. LGBTI+ young people didn't stop experiencing crises during the current pandemic. Many felt even more isolated from their support networks. Some experienced emotional and physical abuse. Many felt alone, scared and anxious. It had an impact on their mental and physical health. [BeLonG To Youth Services](#) conducted a '*LGBTI+ Life in Lockdown*' survey to try to understand what life is like for LGBTI+ youth during the pandemic, in order to provide the most appropriate support to them. You can read the findings at: <https://belongto.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/LGBTI-Life-in-Lockdown-Key-Findings.pdf>

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Help-Seeking and Health-Seeking Practices among 3 Generations of Men in Bangladesh

Help-seeking and health-seeking are social practices influenced by ethnicity, class, race, age, and gender, among other factors. Globally, research suggests that ideas about masculinity influence men's health-seeking practices. However, only a modest body of literature has considered masculinity in relation to men's health problems in South Asia. To address this research gap, a qualitative study was conducted to gather the narratives of three distinct social generations of men in Bangladesh concerning the understandings of gender and masculinity, and men's help-seeking and health-seeking practices. You can access the full article in the International Journal of Men's Social and Community Health at:

<http://ijmsch.com/index.php/IJMSCH/article/view/25/20>

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Meeting the Needs of Older Male Caregivers

In recognition of both Carers Week (8th-14th June), and Men's Health Week (15th-21st June) 2020, a research group in Ulster University (UU) launched the findings of a three year study exploring the impact of support services in identifying and meeting the needs of older male caregivers. The research team, led by Dr Anne Fee and Professors Sonia McIlfrack and Assumpta Ryan from the Institute of Nursing and Health Research at UU, believe that the necessity to raise awareness of, and to support, male carers is more crucial now than ever - as this is a sub-group whose support needs are not commonly understood. The report can be downloaded at: <https://www.mhfi.org/OlderMaleCaregivers.pdf>

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Children's Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation: Risk Profile for Skin Cancers in Ireland

A report published by the [Institute of Public Health](#) and [NUI Galway's Health Promotion Research Centre](#) presents data on sunburn, sun smart behaviours and sunbed use by children. The report, '*Children's Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation - Risk Profile for Future Skin Cancers in Ireland*', presents data on risk factors in Ireland for developing skin cancer in adult life. It was developed to inform implementation of the National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2019-2022. Data is presented from the 2018 Health Behaviours in School-Aged Children (HBSC) Survey, which reports health behaviours for those aged 10 to 17 years old. The total sample size was 10,271. Childhood sunburn, unprotected sun exposure and use of sunbeds, increase the risk of developing skin cancers. Repeated episodes of severe sunburn during childhood doubles the risk of developing melanoma - the most serious form of skin cancer - in later life. See: <https://publichealth.ie/uvreport>

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Web Links

Men's Issues on the Web ...

[How male hormone deficiency can impact both mood and libido](#)

[Irish employees working from home: decreased physical & mental health & loss of sleep](#)

[Sitting all day may increase your risk of dying from cancer](#)

[We face a post Covid-19 tsunami of mental illness](#)

[Waterford Sports Partnership celebrate Men's Health Week 2020](#) [video]

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Next Edition

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

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

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E-Male Matters is also available online at:
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

