

Men's Health Week 2012 in Ireland

**MEN'S HEALTH - WHAT'S YOUR
FIRST INSTINCT?**

FIGHT
FLIGHT
FIND OUT

MEN'S HEALTH WEEK
MONDAY 11 TO SUNDAY 17 JUNE 2012
VISIT WWW.MHF.ORG FOR
MORE DETAILS

MEN'S HEALTH WEEK

QR CODE | MEN'S HEALTH WEEK | FORUM | Man Matters | LOTTERY FUNDED | HE Feilimeannacht na Scríbhne Síolta Health Service Executive | DESIGN AND PRINT BY NOOSTYLE

Report on Activity

- collated for the Men's Health Forum in Ireland by Colin Fowler,
Director of "Know How - Working with Men" Consultancy

Foreword

Men's Health Week (MHW) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. This year, it ran from Monday 11th until Sunday 17th June 2012.

MHW is celebrated in most European countries, as well as in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and a number of other places worldwide. The concept was agreed at the World Congress on Men's Health in Vienna in 2002. Since that time, groups throughout Ireland have organised local activity to mark this week. It was first celebrated on an all-island basis in 2005 - when the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) took on the coordinating role. This work continues to be a key focus for MHFI.

Each year there is a specific theme for MHW. This is decided individually by each country, and reflects their local concerns and priorities. The theme for 2012 in Ireland centred upon: *"Men's Health - What's Your First Instinct ... Fight? Flight? Find Out?"*

The success of MHW is heavily reliant upon the input of volunteers, the good will of organisations, offers of 'in-kind' and mutual support, the creativity of contributors ... and many bodies throughout the island of Ireland were involved in this process. However, this year MHFI would especially like to thank:

- **Health Service Executive** - who provided a grant to support the celebration of MHW in the Republic of Ireland.
- **Man Matters** - for funding a broad range of initiatives in Northern Ireland (Man Matters is a Big Lottery funded project, and MHFI is a core partner within it).
- **Institute of Public Health in Ireland** - for their ongoing support for cross-border men's health development, and regular use of their meeting rooms.
- **MHW Planning Group Members** - who freely gave their time and expertise to make MHW 2012 a success.

For more information on MHW 2012 - and what took place in previous years - please visit: www.mhfi.org/international-mens-health-week.html

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Executive Summary

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) is a diverse network of individuals and organisations, men and women, from both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. MHFI has operated since 1999, with the core aim of promoting and enhancing all aspects of the health and well-being of males on the island of Ireland.

MHFI first celebrated Men's Health Week (MHW) in 2005. Since that time, the coordination of MHW activity on the island of Ireland has become one of the Forum's core areas of work.

The overarching aims of MHW each year are to: heighten awareness of preventable health problems for males; support men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices and activities; encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males.

In 2012, MHW ran from Monday 11th until Sunday 17th June. In Ireland, the theme centred upon: "Men's Health - What's Your First Instinct ... Fight? Flight? Find Out?"

The MHFI Board of Trustees appointed a MHW 2012 Planning Sub-Group to coordinate developments in Ireland. This body was supported by a temporary worker - Colin Fowler. The Sub-Group felt that MHFI should act in the roles of promoter, coordinator, educator, animateur, convenor, prompter, signposter and quartermaster. Thus the Forum's role focused upon kick-starting the engagement process for others, rather than acting as a direct service delivery body for men.

The Planning Sub-Group determined a set of nine realistic objectives for MHW 2012 ...

- i. **Convene and administer an all-island Planning Group:** This body included 40 diverse organisations, and met three times to help to shape MHW 2012. Members were asked to use their own agency's networks / resources to promote MHW, to develop on-the-ground activity, and to work in partnership with each other.
- ii. **Design and produce promotional materials:** MHFI oversaw the design and production of a range of new MHW graphics and promotional materials (logos, banners, web images and posters) which were offered online (for free and in a variety of sizes and formats to suit all media) to anyone who wished to raise awareness of the week or to be associated with it. These were widely utilised.

- iii. **Research, collate and disseminate a briefing paper:** MHFI prepared and circulated a Briefing Paper to everyone on its mailing list (including media outlets), as well as making this available for online downloading. This document provided answers to the most common questions that anyone might ask about MHW 2012.
- iv. **Collate a document on ‘what can I do to mark this week’:** A short paper was produced which offered simple and practical suggestions on how to get involved in MHW 2012. This was circulated to everyone on the MHFI mailing list, and was made available online.
- v. **Increase awareness of MHW 2012:** MHFI updated and consolidated its media and organisational mailing lists; utilised social and electronic media (including the updated MHFI Facebook and Twitter sites); encouraged Planning Group partners to use their contacts and dissemination mechanisms; circulated updates via the ‘E-Male Matters’ newsletter; ensured a high level of media interest and coverage.
- vi. **Provide a free, easy to access, online information hub:** MHFI created and maintained a new MHW 2012 section on its website, and used the Home Page and News Page of this site to raise awareness of the most recent developments.
- vii. **Promote the details of MHW activity and events:** The Forum invited organisations throughout Ireland to submit details of their MHW activities for inclusion in an e-booklet. Details could be submitted online (via a new events registration form), by email attachment, or in hard copy. This content was regularly promoted in MHFI’s online communications and mail-outs.
- viii. **Offer a signposting service to sources of support, information and resources:** In the lead-up to MHW, MHFI offered a ‘signposting service’ to organisations looking for ideas / resources / information / contacts ... to facilitate their involvement in the week. In total, 72 requests were dealt with.
- ix. **Support other small scale and affordable actions:** MHFI sought to support (where possible) small scale and affordable actions / projects which could promote or add value to MHW 2012. The Forum did this by directing local groups to available funding / resources; helping them to network with similar projects; working in partnership with other organisations to plan and deliver activities.

1. The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI)

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) is a diverse network of individuals and organisations, men and women, from both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The Forum was established in 1999, and operates on an all-island basis. At present, it has one temporary self-employed worker, but is, primarily, structured, organised and run using the expertise, resources and enthusiasm of volunteers.

MHFI is a small charitable organisation (accepted as a charity by the Revenue under Reference Number: CHY19591) which is registered in the Republic of Ireland as a Company Limited by Guarantee (Reference Number: 491368). The Forum seeks to promote all aspects of the health and well being of men and boys on the island of Ireland through research, training, networking, practical health initiatives and advocacy. It is managed by a Board of Trustees.

Anyone - individual or organisation - who can agree with the mission, value base, and aims of MHFI can ask to be included on the Forum's mailing list to receive the monthly electronic newsletter ('E-Male Matters') - as well as other updates, briefings, announcements and invitations in the field of work with men and boys.

2. Aims and Objectives of MHFI

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) seeks to promote and enhance all aspects of the health and well-being of males on the island of Ireland.

The principal objectives of MHFI are:

- The advancement of the education of the population in Ireland in all aspects of the health and well-being of men and boys and, in particular, but not exclusively, by providing information, commissioning and disseminating research, offering training programmes, piloting practical health initiatives, facilitating networks, and promoting debate on key issues with policy makers, service providers and the general public.
- The preservation and protection of men's health.

3. MHFI's Value Base

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) works on an all-island basis to enhance the health of men and boys. The Forum recognises the right of everyone to good health regardless of age, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, marital status, domestic circumstances, religious or political affiliations.

MHFI believes that all men and boys have the right to:

- The best possible health.
- Gender-specific information and education on how to keep themselves healthy.
- Equity of access to available, affordable and gender-sensitive services.
- Have their issues recognised and properly addressed - in a way that is not at the expense of women's or children's health, but seen as beneficial to society as a whole.
- Call for greater emphasis on a partnership approach in developing future strategies and initiatives on men's health. This includes consultation between policy-makers, healthcare providers, statutory and voluntary groups working on behalf of men, employers, and men themselves.

4. Origins of Men's Health Week (MHW)

At the Second World Congress on Men's Health in Vienna, Austria, in 2002, representatives from men's health organisations from across the world decided to work together to launch Men's Health Week (MHW). Their simple aim was to increase awareness of male health issues, and to encourage the development of health policies and services that meet men's specific needs. It was hoped that this would have an impact at international, national, regional and local levels.

MHW is celebrated in most European countries, as well as in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and a number of other places worldwide. The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) first celebrated MHW in Ireland in 2005. Since that time, the coordination of MHW activity on the island of Ireland has become one of the Forum's core areas of work each year. MHFI cooperates with other Men's Health Fora across Europe to mark this occasion annually.

5. Aims of MHW

The overall aims of Men's Health Week (MHW) each year are to:

- Heighten awareness of preventable health problems for males of all ages.
- Support men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices / activities.
- Encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males.

All initiatives to celebrate MHW (in whatever form) are encouraged - as the simple rationale behind this week is to highlight men's health and well-being needs and issues.

6. Date of MHW 2012

Men's Health Week (MHW) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. In 2012, it ran from Monday 11th until Sunday 17th June 2012.

7. Theme of MHW 2012

Each year, Men's Health Week (MHW) focuses upon a specific theme. Previous MHWs in Ireland have focused upon:

2005 - Obesity

2006 - Mental Wellbeing

2007 - Long-term Conditions

2008 - Workplace Health

2009 - Access to Services

2010 - Physical Activity

2011 - Health and Well-Being During Challenging Times

The theme for 2012 in Ireland centred upon: *"Men's Health - What's Your First Instinct ... Fight? Flight? Find Out?"* This focus sought to encourage men and boys to develop a 'first instinct' which is to seek help and support in times of difficulty or trouble. The theme was determined by members of the all-island MHW Planning Group, who felt that this would be the most relevant and appropriate topic to address during 2012.

Human beings start out life with a pre-disposition for self-preservation. This 'first instinct' drives them to eat well, keep fit, be active, ensure personal safety, look after themselves, work collectively, tend to injuries etc.

However, over time - especially in Western societies - it is easy to become complacent, lazy, individualistic, neglectful, isolated, lonely ... and, consequently, for health (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) to suffer.

This year's MHW focused upon encouraging and developing a 'first instinct' in males which is to actively seek help, advice, support, and to act quickly in times of difficulty / crisis / ill health rather than to ignore symptoms, turn to alcohol, 'soldier on' or take their own life when faced with difficulties.

8. Target Audience

The purpose of Men's Health Week (MHW) each year is to draw attention to the health and well-being issues affecting men and boys, and to encourage / promote personal, structural and systemic change where possible. This, therefore, implies that any messages and engagement needs to target:

- Males themselves
- Policy / decision-makers
- Service providers
- Public awareness and preconceptions

MHW provides a focal point for men's health issues in Ireland, and gives everyone (health professionals, service providers, youth groups, sporting bodies, community organisations, employers, policy makers, family workers, the media, parents, individuals etc.) an opportunity to encourage men and boys to take better care of their health and to seek help or treatment at an early stage.

9. MHFI Planning Sub-Group for MHW 2012

At a meeting of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) Board of Trustees on Monday 5th September 2011, it was agreed that a Men's Health Week (MHW) Planning Sub-Group - comprised of members of the MHFI Management Committee - should be established. This body was asked to:

- Set appropriate aims and objectives for MHFI's involvement in MHW 2012.
- Identify potential members for an all-island, inter-agency Planning Group.
- Work with the inter-agency Planning Group to determine the overarching theme for MHW 2012 in Ireland.
- Participate in, input to, and act as the executive of, the all-island MHW 2012 Planning Group.
- Design and deliver realistic actions on behalf of MHFI to support the celebration of MHW 2012.
- Oversee and steer developments on behalf of MHFI.
- Report back to the MHFI Board of Trustees.

The Planning Sub-Group was comprised of:

- Lorcan Brennan - Men's Development Network, Waterford
- Michael Lynch - Men's Action Network, Derry
- Finian Murray - Health Service Executive, Dublin/North East

During this period, Colin Fowler (from 'Know How' in Belfast) was paid as MHFI's temporary, self-employed, Director of Operations. He was asked join this body, and acted as convenor, administrator and executive officer of the Sub-Group.

The Sub-Group held three discussions. These were ...

- Skype Conference - Monday 14th November 2011
- Meeting in Dublin - Wednesday 30th November 2011
- Teleconference - Thursday 12th January 2012

Further ongoing business was conducted via meetings before / after the all-island Planning Group events, as well as by regular telephone and email communications.

10. Role of MHFI in MHW 2012

Historically, there had been a tendency for the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) to react and respond to emerging issues and opportunities both before and during Men's Health Week (MHW). However, when planning for MHW 2012, it was agreed by the MHFI Planning Sub-Group that the Forum should (as had been successful during 2011) be more realistic about what it can do / offer during the week, and how it can play a unique role within the constraints of its own limited assets and capabilities.

It was accepted by the Planning Sub-Group that no matter what role MHFI plays, it can never, on its own, engage with a huge number of men in Ireland or those who work with them. From the outset it was, therefore, acknowledged that MHFI is best positioned to kick start the engagement process for others, rather than being a direct service delivery body for men.

Subsequently, it was agreed that during MHW 2012, MHFI would act as:

- *Promoter* - raising awareness of what the week is and when it will happen.
- *Coordinator* - acting as the central contact point for and hub of activity in Ireland.
- *Educator* - making the case for MHW and men's health needs.
- *Animateur* - encouraging others to grasp the vision and do something about it.
- *Convenor* - bringing interested groups together to work in partnership.
- *Prompter* - reminding decision-makers / service providers about men's health needs.
- *Signposter* - offering direction to resources, research, support and activities.
- *Quartermaster* - supplying the basic information / resources / tools (e.g. facts, logos, posters, communication mechanisms) to support the celebration of MHW throughout Ireland.

11. MHFI's Objectives for MHW 2012

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) Planning Sub-Group determined a set of nine realistic objectives for Men's Health Week (MHW) 2012. These were ratified by the MHFI Management Committee, and consisted of:

- i. Establish, convene and administer an inter-agency, all-island, MHW 2012 **Planning Group** - consisting of health related organisations and other bodies who have contact with men. Where possible, encourage and develop mutually beneficial partnership work with / between these groups.
- ii. Design and produce **promotional materials** to add a common brand to this week. These will be offered free to all organisations and groups (via online download) who wish to promote MHW 2012.
- iii. Research, collate and disseminate a **briefing paper** which provides the context of MHW, the rationale for the theme selected in Ireland, and an overview of what is planned. This will offer a core understanding of what MHW is / seeks to achieve, and will help to ensure a consistent approach across Ireland.
- iv. Collate a document on “**what can I do to mark this week**” - to encourage individuals and groups to envisage realistic and practical ways that they can celebrate MHW 2012.
- v. **Increase awareness** amongst the general public, service providers, decision-makers and men, themselves, about MHW 2012 - especially through the media and by circulating updates / materials to the MHFI mailing database.
- vi. Provide a free, easy to access, **online information hub** for MHW 2012.
- vii. Promote the **details of MHW activity and events** on the MHFI website and in MHFI publications.
- viii. Offer a **signposting service** to other sources of support, information and resources - by telephone, email and online.
- ix. Support (where possible) other **small scale and affordable actions** / projects which promote or add value to MHW 2012.

12. How MHFI met the Objectives for MHW 2012

12.1 Inter-Agency Planning Group

Since 2005, when the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) first marked Men's Health Week (MHW) in Ireland, the Forum has recognised that there are a lot of organisations and groups throughout the island who can contribute to the health and well-being of men and boys. This work is not solely applicable only to those who work directly in the health field. Indeed, the overall aims of MHW each year offer an opportunity for a very wide range of agencies to actively participate.

To further the aims of MHW 2012, MHFI identified and convened an all-island, inter-agency, MHW Planning Group. All members of the MHW 2011 Planning Group were, once again, invited to participate. However, since last year, some people had moved jobs and were, therefore, unavailable. A small number of other previous members felt that they would be unable to offer any input due to current staff / resource shortages within their own organisations.

In advance of the first meeting, a range of additional agencies were identified by the MHFI Planning Sub-Group and asked to join the development process. There was a 100% positive response rate to this solicitation. Then, at the first meeting, group members were reminded that this is an open forum which welcomes the input of anyone who is willing to contribute. Subsequently, a number of other possible participants were suggested by group members and invited to join.

During MHW 2012, the Planning Group drew upon the insight, expertise, support and contacts of individuals from 40 diverse organisations ...

Name	Organisation
Kate Markey	Amen
Paula Devine	ARK (Access Research Knowledge)
Peter Shaw	Belfast Comm Sports Development Network
Paul O'Kane	Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Ruth Fitzsimmons	British Medical Association NI
Ruairi McKiernan	Community.ie

John Cantwell	Fír Le Cheile (Men Together)
Liam McGroarty	Football Association of Ireland (FAI)
Jimmy D'Arcy and Sean Kilbride	Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA)
Finian Murray	Health Service Executive, Dublin / North East
Nigel O'Callaghan and Roisin Doolan	Inspire Ireland Foundation
Joanne Vance	Irish Cancer Society
Lisa Rickett	Irish Football Association (IFA)
Ann Scanlon	Irish Heart Foundation
John Evoy	Irish Men's Sheds Forum
Scott Walker and Eoin Hogan	Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU)
Colm McGinty	Irish Sports Council
Sandra Gordon	Man Alive
Gary Smyth	Man Matters Project
Geraldine Gleeson	Marie Keating Foundation
Darach Murphy	Men Alone in No-mans-land (MAIN)
Ray Tonge	Men As Learners and Elders (MALES)
Michael Lynch	Men's Action Network (MAN)
Lorcan Brennan	Men's Development Network
Colin Fowler	Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI)
Ted Tierney	Mental Health Ireland
Kevin O'Hagan and Siobhan Brennan	National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)
Darren Lawless	Niamh
Jessica Perry	NI Chest, Heart and Stroke (NICHHS)
Luke Boyle	NI Medical Students' Committee
Geraldine McDonnell	Northern Health & Social Care Trust
Leo Foy	Public Health Agency - Southern Area
Andrew Castles	SafeFood
Suzanne Costello	Samaritans
Angela Corr	Southern Health & Social Care Trust
John News	Sport NI

Keith McAdam	Sure Start Fathers Network
Marita Hennessy	Trinity College Dublin
Sonia Montgomery	Western Health & Social Care Trust
Michael McKenna	YouthAction NI

The MHW Planning Group met three times between February and May 2012:

- Wednesday 8th February 2012
- Thursday 19th April 2012
- Wednesday 30th May 2012

All of these meetings were conducted via video-link between the offices of the Institute of Public Health in Dublin and Belfast, and each gathering lasted 2 - 2¹/₂ hours. The meetings were convened, coordinated, minuted, and administered by Colin Fowler from MHFI. Additional business was conducted via email and telephone in the interim periods.

It was impossible for members of the Planning Group to attend every meeting. However, everyone was kept up-to-date via the minutes of meetings, and there was substantial ongoing communication between all parties - who were asked to help with practical tasks (such as collating research, preparing contact lists, field-testing poster ideas ...) between events.

As well as advising on the shape and structure of MHW 2012, members of the Planning Group were asked to use their own agency's networks and resources to promote MHW and to develop on-the-ground activity. This was realised in practical terms, via, for example ...

- Disseminating hard copies of the MHW 2012 posters and image pack.
- Promoting MHW on their own websites, Facebook and Twitter pages.
- Organising regular update mailings within their own agencies.
- Developing in-house campaigns / projects to coincide with MHW.
- Highlighting MHW in their local media ...

In addition, many members also collaborated on projects outside the formal meetings. These included, for example ...

- Organisations cooperating to field-test the concepts / prototype images for MHW.
- The Western Health and Social Care Trust working with Men's Action Network to offer a series of events and men's health checks throughout the Western area.
- Man Matters supporting the Sure Start Fathers Network to run a large scale event offering free health checks, football, physical activity challenges and family fun.
- The Northern Ireland Medical Students' Committee working with MHFI to prepare a short presentation on MHW 2012 for a meeting of GPs.
- Man Alive involving the Southern Health and Social Care Trust's Men's Health Network in the planning for and delivery of their MHW conference.
- ARK liaising with MHFI to research, write, publish and disseminate a factsheet on "Young Men and Sexual Health".
- The Belfast Men's Health Group working in partnership with Youth Action to organise a seminar on "Challenges when Engaging with Young Men" ...


12.2 Promotional Materials

It was agreed by the Planning Group that - as happened during Men's Health Week (MHW) 2011 - it would be important to create a unique identity and common brand for the week this year. Thus, it could be owned by everyone, and be independent of any specific organisation. This, they believed, would:

- Help to unify and simplify the concept of MHW.
- Encourage 'buy-in' from a broad range of agencies.
- Offer groups who do not have the time or resources to run an event for MHW the opportunity to show their support.
- Increase publicity.


To achieve this aim, the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) oversaw the design and production of a range of MHW 2012 graphics and promotional materials. These were later offered online (for free and in a variety of sizes and formats to suit all media) to anyone who wished to raise awareness of the week or to be associated with it.

It was agreed that the dedicated MHW logo - which was designed in 2011 - should, once again, provide the core focus for the week. This, alongside a generic “We Support Men’s Health Week” badge, was included in the array of images that were offered...

	<p>A generic MHW logo which does not have a date attached - so that it can be used again in the future to identify / promote this week.</p>
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This image was produced as:

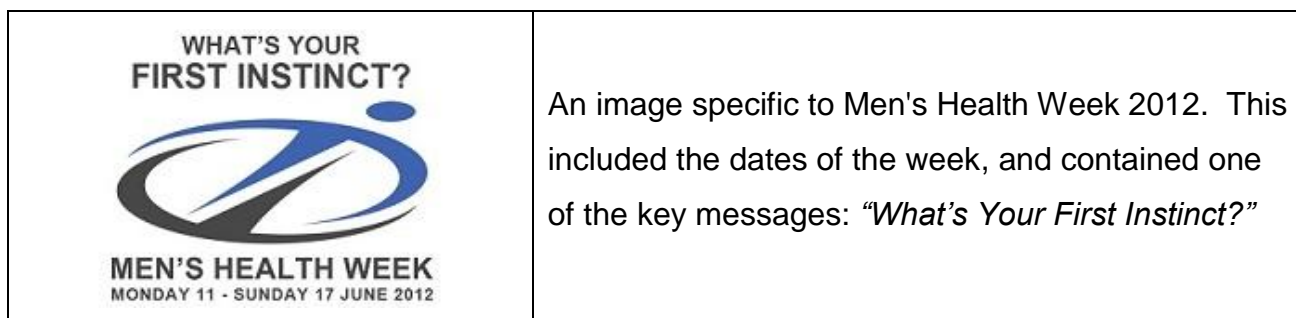
- Large JPG - good for general use
- Small JPG - good for general use and websites
- Large TIF - best for high resolution professional print jobs
- Large Transparent PNG - for use against a coloured or textured background
- Small Transparent PNG - for use against a coloured or textured background on websites
- Large Whiteout PNG - white image of the logo when on a coloured background
- Small Whiteout PNG - white image of the logo when on a coloured background
- Small Square JPG - for use as a Facebook profile picture (*this was a new addition to the image pack in 2012 - as it had been asked for during MHW 2011*)

	<p>A “We Support Men’s Health Week” logo. Again, this was deliberately not dated to ensure that it can be used in the future to identify / promote this week.</p>
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This image was produced as:

- Large PNG - good for general use
- Small PNG - good for general use and, especially, on websites
- Large Whiteout PNG - produces a white image of the logo when placed on a coloured background

However, a broad range of dedicated images for MHW 2012 were also designed and made available on the MHFI website ...

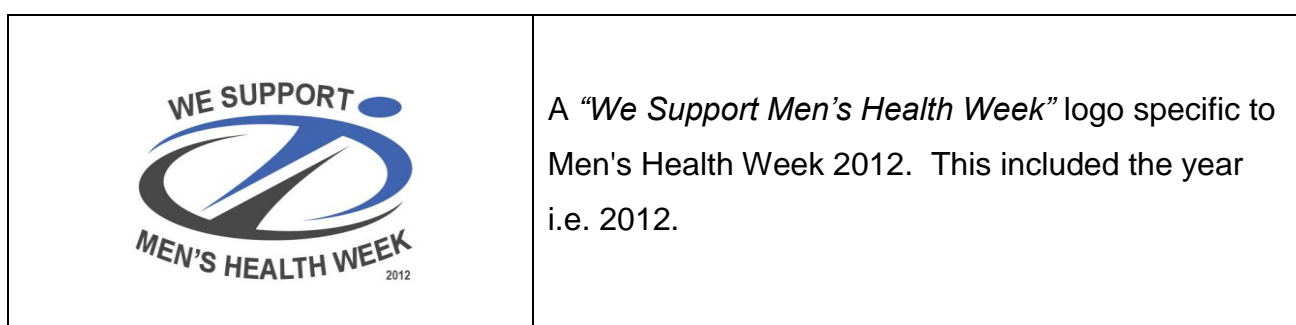


This image was produced as:

- Large JPG - good for general use
- Small JPG - good for general use and websites

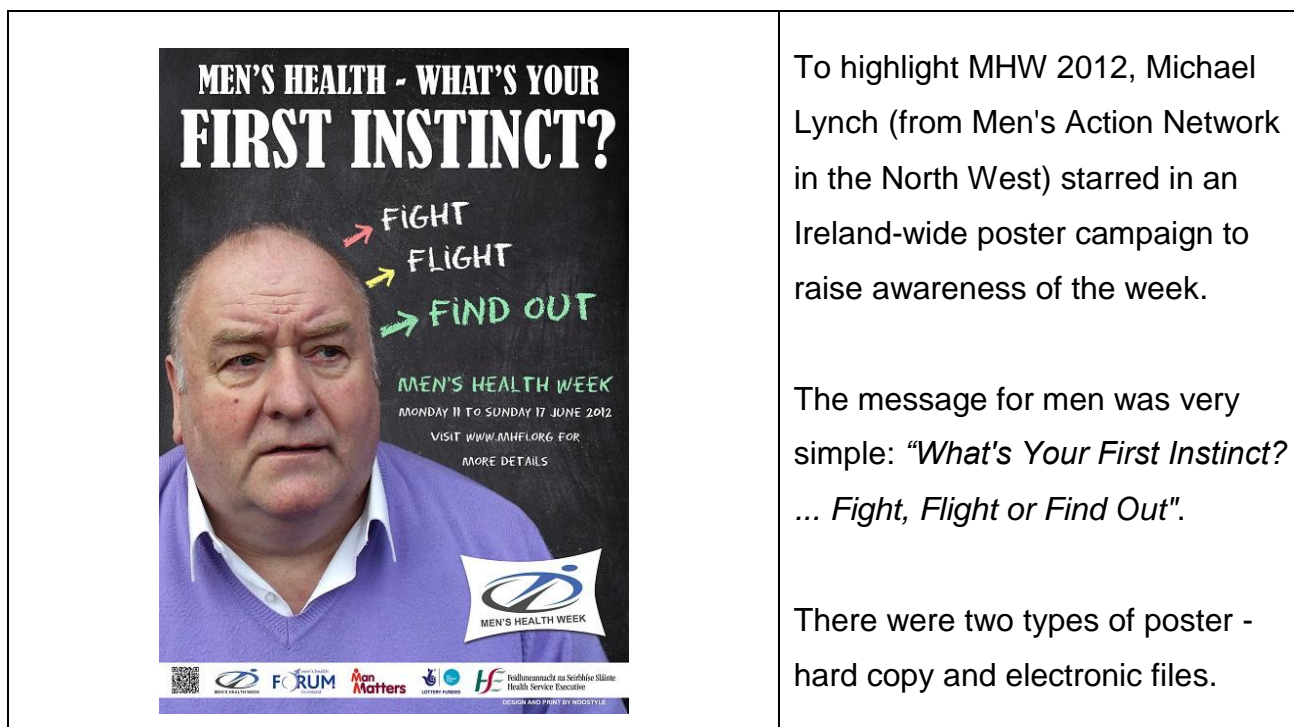


This image was produced as a small JPG - for use on websites, emails and as a letterhead.



This image was produced as:

- Medium PNG - good for general use and websites
- Medium Whiteout PNG - produces a white image of the logo when placed on a coloured background.



Hard copies of the poster (A₃ size) could be ordered by contacting Finian Murray (if from the Republic of Ireland) or Colin Fowler (if from Northern Ireland). 3,000 hard copies of the poster were circulated to organisations throughout Ireland.

Electronic versions of the poster were also made available in a range of formats:

- Portable Document Format (PDF) - prints poster at A₄ size
- Poster with Blank Box (PDF) - prints poster at A₄ size, and includes a blank box to handwrite the details of local events into
- Poster with type-your-details Blank Box (Word Document) - prints poster at A₄ size, and includes a blank box to type the details of local events into
- Large JPG - original A₃ size image, best for high resolution print jobs and large posters
- Small JPG - small, low resolution image, useful for websites and inclusion in emails / Word documents
- JPG Thumbnail - small, fairly low resolution image, useful for websites and inclusion in emails
- Square JPG - for use as a Facebook profile picture

This range of options proved useful to many groups who could 'piggy-back' on the official poster (and enter their local event details) without needing their own graphic designer.

This was the first year that the MHW Poster had a QR (Quick Response) Code inserted. This allowed Smart Phone users to scan the bar code and to be instantly directed to the MHW 2012 web page at: www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html



The promotional materials produced for MHW proved to be very popular (indeed, in most cases, more so than in 2011), and were downloaded frequently in the period leading up and during MHW 2012. AWStats - the programme used to monitor activity on the MHFI website - reveals that, by Monday 18th June 2012, the ...

- MHW 2012 poster had been downloaded 5,134 times (*the 2011 posters were downloaded 2,713 times*).
- “What’s Your First Instinct?” logo had been downloaded 1,986 times (*the dedicated logo for 2011 was downloaded 702 times*).
- Banner specific to MHW 2012 had been downloaded 2,002 times (*the 2011 banner was downloaded 1,821 times*).
- “We Support Men’s Health Week 2012” logo had been downloaded 861 times (*the 2011 logo was downloaded 824 times*).
- Generic MHW logo had been downloaded 3,097 times (*the 2011 logo was downloaded 2,489 times*).
- Generic “We Support Men’s Health Week” logo had been downloaded 711 times (*the 2011 logo was downloaded 824 times*).
- Poster QR Code directed 1,031 visitors to the MHW 2012 web page.

12.3 Briefing Paper

During previous Men’s Health Weeks (MHW), the Men’s Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) learned the value of producing a comprehensive overview document on the origins, focus and structure of the week. Subsequently, when preparing for MHW 2012, MHFI researched, collated and widely disseminated a Briefing Paper to everyone on the mailing list (including media outlets). This was done via a Portable Document Format file, which was also made available for online downloading.

This Briefing Paper (see [Appendix 1](#) for a copy) provided answers to the most common questions that anyone might ask about MHW 2012, and included:

- Why do we need to focus upon men's health issues and needs?
- When is Men's Health Week?
- Where is Men's Health Week celebrated?
- What are the aims of Men's Health Week?
- Is there a specific theme this year?
- Why 'First Instinct'?
- What were the themes for Men's Health Week in previous years?
- Who is the target audience?
- Who can be involved in this week?
- How can my organisation be involved?
- Are there any ways that I can promote the week?
- Who has planned Men's Health Week 2012 in Ireland?
- What is the Men's Health Forum in Ireland?
- How can I find out more about Men's Health Week?

This document helped to provide clarity about MHW, and to ensure that all members of the MHW 2012 Planning Group (and others) had a coherent idea of what they were working towards. This paper was also circulated to all the media outlets in Ireland to increase their understanding of the week, and was widely utilised in coverage by these bodies.

12.4 What can I do to Mark this Week?

Men's Health Week (MHW) provides an opportunity for everyone to contribute to improving the health and well-being of men and boys. Indeed, the theme for 2012 (i.e. encouraging men and boys to develop a 'first instinct' which is to seek help and support in times of difficulty or trouble) lent itself to a wide range of ways to mark this occasion.

However, in the lead-up to MHW 2012, the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) also emphasised that groups did not have to stick rigidly to this particular topic. MHFI's core message was that anything which encourages men and boys to lead healthier lifestyles, to be more aware of preventable health problems, and to seek early detection and treatment for health difficulties would be welcome.

MHFI recognised that some organisations have time, energy and resources to plan a large-scale event for MHW. Others have to fit-in MHW activities around an already tight schedule and limited budget. Yet others, want to show their support for the week, but cannot commit to doing an actual ‘thing’ during the week. To try to accommodate all of these circumstances, MHFI produced a short paper (see [Appendix 2](#) for a copy) which offered simple and practical suggestions on ‘what can I do to mark this week?’ This was circulated to everyone on the MHFI mailing list, and was made available online.

The main purpose of this document was to encourage a broad range of individuals and groups to envisage ways that they could get involved - based upon the premise that many people realise why they should engage in MHW, but are not fully aware of how to go about it. Therefore, this resource also contributed to the signposting role of MHFI.

12.5 Awareness Raising

One of the key objectives for the Men’s Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) during Men’s Health Week (MHW) 2012 was to increase awareness of the issues facing / needs of males. This objective targeted service providers, decision-makers / formers, and the general public (including men, themselves).

There were four key mechanisms adopted to achieve this goal:

(a) Mailing List Updates

MHFI substantially increased the number of people on its e-distribution lists (from 2,971 in 2011 to 3,512 in 2012), and regularly (at least monthly from December 2011 onwards) updated these people about MHW 2012. This included sending a ‘Season’s Greetings’ card, regular MHW 2012 features in ‘E-Male Matters’ (the MHFI e-newsletter - see www.mhfi.org/about-e-male-matters.html), and arranging single issue MHW mailouts as appropriate.

These distribution lists included TDs, MLAs, Government Equality Leads, statutory health service staff, academics, a broad range of voluntary and community sector organisations, and men themselves. The women’s sector was also encouraged to circulate information to the men in their lives.

(b) Social and Electronic Media

A new MHW 2012 section was established on the MHFI website (www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html), and the three social media sites administered by MHFI were maintained and regularly updated throughout 2012. These sites were:

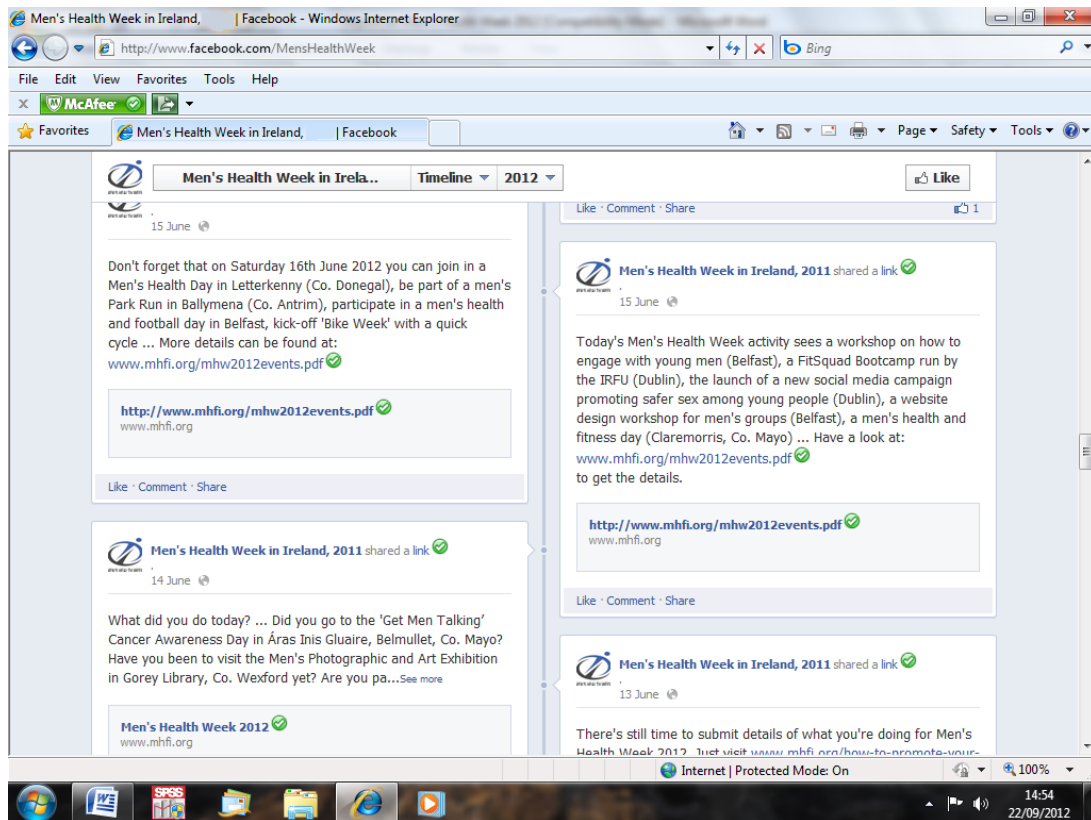
- www.facebook.com/MensHealthWeek - MHW Facebook page
- www.facebook.com/menshealthforumireland - MHFI Facebook page
- <http://twitter.com/MensHealthIRL> - MHFI Twitter page

The frequency of updates increased as MHW drew closer, and these were uploaded at least once per day during the week itself. All of the sites posted similar information.

During MHW 2012, the dedicated Facebook page for the week (i.e. www.facebook.com/MensHealthWeek) experienced a peak of popularity - with Monday 11th June 2012 being the most visited day. Throughout this week, the page:

- Had 203 core 'Fans'.
- Was visited by 3,431 different people - with 43% of these in the age band 25-34 years of age; 24% aged 35-44 years; 16% aged 18-24 years; 10% aged 45-54 years; 7% aged 55 years and over.
- Got 95% of all its visitors from Ireland (both Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland), with a further 4% from English speaking countries (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand and the USA), and 1% from (mostly) other European countries.
- Benefitted from a huge 'viral' following - most visitors arrived at the page after being specifically recommended by / directed to it by other organisations' and individuals' web and social media postings.
- Received 79% of all page views from males.

During April and June 2012 (inclusive), there were 15,621 views of posts on this page.

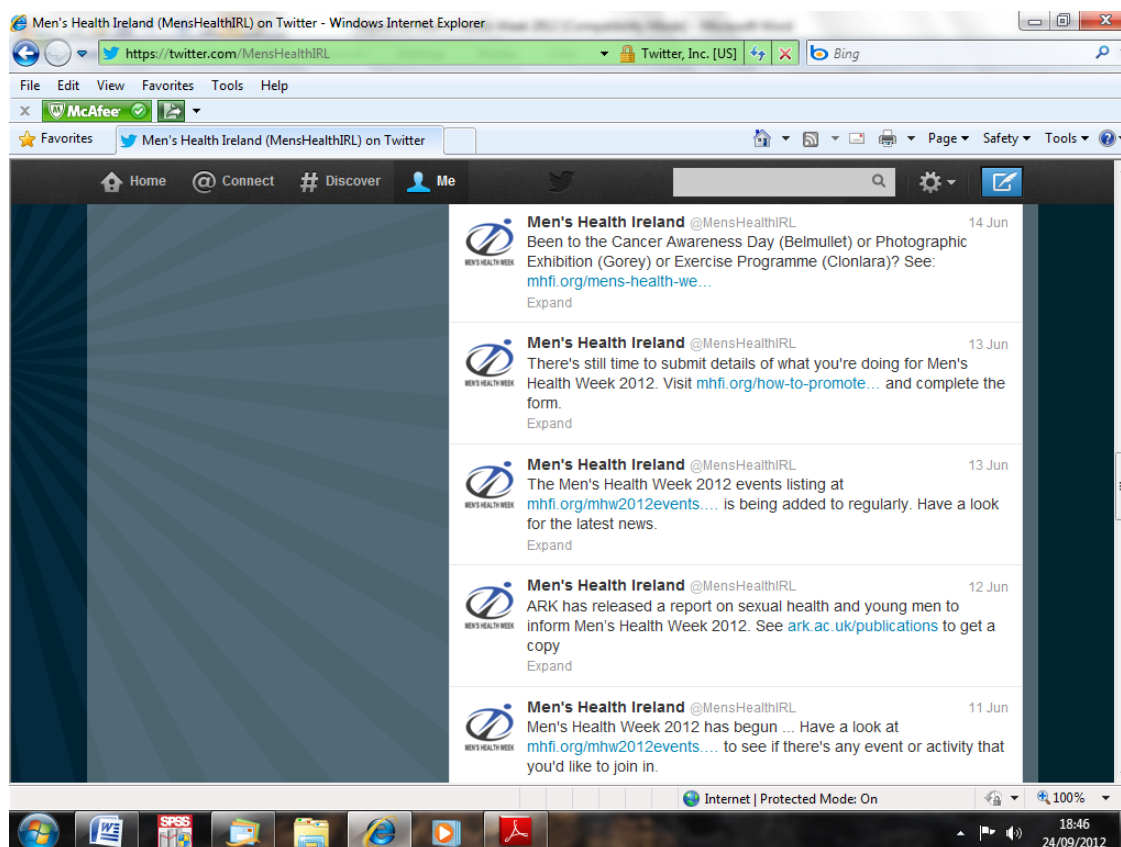


In the wake of MHW 2011, MHFI had expanded its own Facebook Page i.e. www.facebook.com/menshealthforumireland. The popularity of this site also peaked during MHW and, once again, Monday 11th June 2012 was the most visited day. Throughout MHW 2012, this page:

- Had 84 core 'Fans'.
- Was visited by 4,043 different people - with 46% of these in the age band 25-34 years of age; 25% aged 35-44 years; 17% aged 18-24 years; 11% aged 45-54 years; 1% aged 55 years and over.
- Got 92% of all its visitors from Ireland (both Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland), with a further 6% from English speaking countries (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales, Australia, New Zealand and the USA), and 2% from (mostly) other European countries.
- Received 58% of all page views from males.

During April and June 2012 (inclusive), there were 17,221 views of posts on this page.

By MHW 2012, the MHFI Twitter page had attracted 182 'Followers', and the 'Tweets' were viewed by 1,206 different people during the week. The content of the Twitter page was also regularly 're-tweeted' by other partners in the MHW inter-agency Planning Group, as well as a range of other health-related bodies.



Furthermore, MHFI utilised the e-communication systems of other organisations to promote MHW 2012. This ensured that the key messages about MHW were disseminated to a diverse range of people from the statutory, voluntary, community, academic, governmental, medical and policy sectors throughout Ireland, as well as to individual men.

(c) Planning Group Partner Contacts and Dissemination Mechanisms

All members of the MHW 2012 Planning Group were asked to raise awareness of the week through their own networks and communication channels such as websites, social media outlets, newsletters, hard copy mailouts, by displaying posters etc. This proved to be a very cost effective means to publicise the week, as well as offering a practical way for partners to actively contribute to the process.

(d) Media Coverage

It was agreed by the Planning Group, that MHFI should play the coordinating role in making the media aware of MHW 2012, raising awareness of the key messages of this week, and linking media outlets to activity in their local catchment area. Subsequently, MHFI was given the task of issuing all the advance notice / preliminary media releases, and acting as the 'gatekeeper' for information on MHW.

It was also agreed that MHFI would not issue anything itself during MHW 2012. Instead, the Forum sought to ensure that the media releases of Planning Group members were evenly spaced out during the week - thus helping to minimise competition between partners and to maximise the publicity received.

In late April / early May 2012, MHFI spent a considerable amount of time updating the contacts on its media database in preparation for the forthcoming campaign. This database covered all media outlets in Ireland - both North and South - that were known to MHFI and included:

- 8 Republic of Ireland / 7 Northern Ireland daily newspapers
- 4 Republic of Ireland / 3 Northern Ireland Sunday newspapers
- 3 Republic of Ireland / 9 Northern Ireland magazines
- 74 Republic of Ireland / 51 Northern Ireland weekly newspapers
- 72 Republic of Ireland / 29 Northern Ireland TV and radio stations
- 8 Irish language broadcasting bodies
- 22 miscellaneous media outlets
- 8 health correspondents
- 8 letters to the editor contacts

In the lead-up to MHW 2012, MHFI sent six mailouts to contacts on the media database. These were:

- Friday 11th May 2012 ... a short advance notice email to all media sources informing them of the dates for MHW 2012 and the theme of the week.

- Tuesday 22nd May 2012 ... a briefing email with more detail about the week, and a copy of the MHW 2012 Briefing Paper (see [Appendix 1](#)).
- Friday 1st June 2012 ... a date for your diary email reminding recipients about the date, the theme, where to find online sources of information / images, and offering MHFI's support to enable their coverage of the week.
- Friday 8th June 2012 ... a press release titled "Stall the Ball - Men's Health for All" (see [Appendix 3](#) for a copy).
- Friday 8th June 2012 ... a press release titled "Sláinte na bhFear do gach duine" (see [Appendix 4](#) for a copy).
- Monday 11th June 2012 ... a final reminder email about MHW 2012.

To maximise uptake, each Press Release gave details of five contact people based throughout Ireland (i.e. in Belfast, Derry/Londonderry, Galway, Kells and Waterford). This proved to be successful - as local media outlets seemed to prefer to speak to the contact person nearest to their area.

A very high level of radio, news print and online coverage was achieved - although, as in previous years, the volume of TV coverage was more limited. This exposure was monitored via the reporting of eye witnesses, as well as by online searches for key words / phrases ...

- Using the Google, Bing, Yahoo, Alta Vista, Excite, Lycos, Ask Jeeves, Gigablast, Hot Bot and AllTheWeb search engines.
- Looking for the terms: Men's Health Week in Ireland 2012; Men's Health Week Ireland 2012; Men's Health Week Ireland; Men's Health Week; MHW; MHW 2012; Men's Health Forum in Ireland; Men's Health Forum Ireland; MHFI; Colin Fowler; what's your first instinct; first instinct; fight, flight or find out; stall the ball; men's health for all; sláinte na bhFear do gach duine.
- Examining and recording the first 20 pages of links generated by each search engine.
- Up until Friday 6th July 2012.

The coverage recorded in these online searches included ...

- 31 newspaper articles - including some of the major dailies e.g. Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, Newsletter, Daily Mirror, Irish Examiner, Irish Times, Irish Independent and Metro Herald.
- 6 magazine features - in publications with large circulations i.e. Irish Pharmacy News, Modern Medicine, Urology Review, Horizon, Irish Medical News and The Journal.ie - these articles were written by MHFI.
- 4 Letters to the Editor - published in the Irish Examiner, Irish Independent, Belfast Telegraph and Newsletter.
- 64 slots (news items and interviews) on the radio - these included national, regional, local, community, and Irish medium stations.
- 6 TV slots - BBC NI News, UTV News, UTV Live Tonight, RTE 1 News, TV3 News, and Nuacht TG4.
- 31 'shoutout requests' on a broad range of radio stations.
- 153 features on 'quality' Irish and British websites (including those of most MHW partners). MHW 2012 in Ireland also received online coverage from over 1,600 newspapers / health feeds / search engines / bloggers / pharma companies / health equipment sales sites ... both national and international.

During this period, MHW 2012 in Ireland was promoted and publicised by a very broad range of bodies including: sporting (IFA, FAI, IRFU and the Liverpool Supporters' Club in Ireland); rural (e.g. Irish Farmers' Journal and rural development organisations); education (e.g. Institutes of Technology and universities throughout Ireland); Trade Unions (e.g. ICTU and TEEU); medical (e.g. Irish College of Psychiatry and Irish Nurses' and Midwives' Association); health (PHA, HSE, DHSSPS and Health and Social Care Trusts); fathers groups (e.g. Dad.ie and Sure Start Fathers' Network); local area community development bodies (e.g. Area Partnership Boards, Volunteer Centres, Community Councils and Family Resource Centres); gay men's support projects (e.g. Gay Health Network and The Rainbow Project); Travellers' health projects (e.g. Kerry, West Limerick and SHSCT); discussion fora (e.g. Boards.ie and Irish Bikers' Forum) ...

MHFI also created bespoke content for e-zines and social networking sites (e.g. Health Bytes, NICVA eNews, Community NI website, IRFU website, FAI Facebook Page, EGSA Newsletter, Parenting Forum Policy E-Brief ...)

12.6 Online Information Hub

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) sought to provide a free, easy to access, online information hub for Men's Health Week (MHW) 2012. To achieve this, the Forum created a new section on its website at: www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html

This webpage acted as the focal point for the week, and offered visitors access to a centralised hub for all available information. In addition, the Home Page, News Page and Latest News scrolling banner on the site raised awareness of recent developments.

The 'AWStats' package used to monitor activity on the MHFI website shows that site traffic increased steadily from January 2012 onwards, and peaked in June 2012 ...

- In January 2012, there were: 1,871 unique visitors; making 3,024 visits; viewing 12,998 web pages; with 98,051 site hits; using 2.12 GB of bandwidth.
- By June 2012, there were: 8,105 unique visitors; making 18,182 visits; viewing 76,924 web pages; with 698,122 site hits; using 8.96GB of bandwidth.

This increased demand placed a heavy burden upon the MHFI website's server. Indeed, following MHW, it was agreed that the site would need to be moved to a hosting provider that could offer unlimited storage and bandwidth to cope with future usage requirements.

The vast majority of website visitors came from Ireland (both North and South). The next largest group came from England, Scotland and Wales; followed by people from other English speaking countries (United States of America, Australia and New Zealand), and then those from European Union countries. This mirrored the experience of MHFI's Facebook and Twitter pages during both MHW 2012 and the lead-up to it.

In terms of file downloads, the most frequently accessed (in order of popularity) were the:

- MHW posters and image pack
- "What's Happening Across Ireland?" events booklet
- "MHW 2012 Briefing Paper"
- "What can I do to mark Men's Health Week 2012?" document

As hoped for, the MHW 2012 webpage (www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html) was the most viewed page on the MHFI site and - during May and June - was also the most frequent entry point to the entire website.

These statistics clearly indicate that the MHFI website experienced a huge increase in traffic in the lead-up to and during MHW 2012. This website - in conjunction with MHFI's Facebook sites and Twitter page - did, therefore, effectively act as an information hub which could offer an overview of MHW, promote events and activities, recruit participants, and provide the latest updates on developments.

12.7 Promotion of Activity and Events

'E-Male Matters' is the monthly electronic newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI). Each edition is, currently, circulated to 3,512 organisations / individuals - many of whom then forward it to other colleagues and contacts.

From April 2012 onwards, this publication featured articles which invited recipients to forward details of their Men's Health Week (MHW) activities to MHFI. This invitation was also included in a monthly email to all the organisations on the Forum's mailing list between April and June 2012 (inclusive), and was issued on the MHFI website, Facebook pages and Twitter site.

The purpose of the invitation was to gather information on MHW 2012 events and initiatives in Ireland, and to create a central inventory of at least some activities happening during the week, where they would take place, and how to join in. It was hoped that this would give recognition to, and increase the profile of, those groups that were doing something for and with men - especially those organisations that do not have their own online presence.

Subscribers were invited to send details of any endeavour related to MHW 2012 to MHFI. This could include, for example, health checks, conferences, launches, games, seminars, competitions, workshops, courses, displays, health fairs ...

Feedback from previous MHWs had suggested that the submission process should be as easy and accessible as possible. To meet this need, four mechanisms were devised for registration of activities and events. It was hoped that these diverse systems would accommodate all interested parties:

- A new online registration form was created for the submission of details at: www.mhfi.org/how-to-promote-your-mens-health-week-event.html This was the first time that MHFI had developed an online form on its website.
- A registration form, in Microsoft Word format, was available for downloading at: www.mhfi.org/mhw2012project.doc Organisations were invited to save a copy of this document to their computer, type in their details, and email it back to MHFI.
- A registration form, in Portable Document Format (PDF), was available for downloading at: www.mhfi.org/mhw2012project.pdf Organisations could print this file, handwrite their details, and post it back to MHFI.
- Those without access to the Internet were asked to phone Colin Fowler, from MHFI, and have a hard copy of the form sent to them in the post. This could then be completed in pen and returned to MHFI.

To ensure consistency in the format of information, a registration template was devised (see [Appendix 5](#) for a copy). The information submitted was edited by MHFI, and then inserted into a cumulative publication titled: “Men’s Health Week 2012 - What’s Happening Across Ireland?” This booklet (which had an internal hyperlink format) was made available on the MHFI website at: www.mhfi.org/mhw2012events.pdf A list of the events included in this publication can be found in [Appendix 6](#).

This publication - and the individual entries contained within it - were regularly promoted in ‘E-Male Matters’ as well as via MHFI’s other online communications media. This booklet proved to be the second most popular download on the MHFI website. Entries were regularly added to it in the period leading up to MHW 2012.

12.8 Signposting Service

In the lead-up to Men’s Health Week (MHW) 2012, the Men’s Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) offered a ‘signposting service’ to organisations looking for ideas / resources / information / contacts / research ... to facilitate their involvement in MHW. This ‘helpline’ service was coordinated by Colin Fowler.

In total, 72 requests were dealt with. The vast majority of these were conducted via telephone calls and email correspondence. However, a small number required on-site visits.

12.9 Small Scale Projects

Although, from the outset, the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) Sub-Group for Men's Health Week (MHW) acknowledged that the Forum needed to be realistic about what it could achieve, it also sought to support (where possible) small scale and affordable actions / projects which could promote or add value to MHW 2012.

MHFI did this via soliciting support for MHW from regional bodies, directing local groups to available funding / resources, helping organisations to network with similar projects, and working in partnership with other organisations to plan and deliver activities. In the period leading-up and during MHW, this included, for example:

- Working with the Southern Health and Social Care Trust's Men's Health Network to organise and deliver "Framework for Men's Health" training.
- Contributing to the organisation of a seminar on "The Impact of Recession on Men's Health".
- Delivering a training session to Sure Start staff on the importance / practicalities of engaging with fathers on health and well-being issues.
- Helping to plan and organise a seminar on the role that 'Men's Sheds' can play in improving the health of men in Ireland.
- Arranging for the delivery of a workshop titled "Jest for the Health of it" - which focused upon the use of humour when promoting men's health messages.
- Participating in the working group tasked with developing information materials for the Northern Ireland Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening Programme - launched around the time of MHW 2012.
- Assisting with the organisation of the "Putting Men's Health onto the Agenda" seminar.
- Meeting with the Public Health Agency (PHA) to secure their support for communicating the key messages of MHW 2012 to all their staff and contacts.
- Supporting Eircom to develop a 'Health Net' initiative for their male employees.
- Making a presentation to / preparing a Briefing Paper for the Health Committee within the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety - on what lessons Northern Ireland could learn from the National Men's Health Policy in the Republic of Ireland.

- Negotiating the dissemination of MHW posters among national / regional organisations such as the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, H&G Martin Building Contractors, PHA ...
- Requesting the involvement of the Irish President in the launch of the MHW posters.
- Contributing to the planning group for the MHW cross-Border conference titled 'First Instinct', and facilitating two sessions in this.
- Participating in the coordinating group for the large-scale Men's Health Day in Belfast City Hall.
- Promoting and recruiting participants for the "Challenges of Engaging with Young Men" workshop.
- Advising First Steps Women's Centre about how to set-up a men's group in their premises.
- Helping Harryville Partnership to reflect upon men's health needs, and advising them on how to set-up a men's health initiative in their area.
- Re-circulating the briefing paper titled: "Men's Health in Northern Ireland: Tackling the Root Causes of Men's [III] Health" to all MLAs.
- Assisting a range of projects to provide 'Street Doctor' health checks - offered by the Northern Ireland Medical Students' Committee ...

MHFI is a core partner in the 'Man Matters' project, which is a Big Lottery funded initiative. Both before and during MHW, Man Matters supported a broad range of interventions throughout Northern Ireland including:

- A large scale health and fitness event for fathers.
- Men's health MOT sessions.
- Men's health information stands / displays.
- The establishment of longer-term programmes of activity.
- The development of a policy briefing paper on the needs of / issues facing fathers.
- Two practical training courses on how to design a website for a men's group / men's project ...

13. Conclusions and Recommendations

The celebration of Men's Health Week (MHW) in Ireland each year is always conducted on a financial shoe-string. The success of the week relies very heavily upon the input of volunteers, the good will of organisations, offers of 'in-kind' and mutual support, and the creativity of contributors. This is, of course, very important, and needs to continue.

The range and scope of MHW activity in 2012 continued to be constrained by resource implications. However, this year did, once again, witness an expansion of the work. The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) was able to support developments in the Republic of Ireland via grant aid from the Health Service Executive (HSE), and was also able to increase the level of activity in Northern Ireland with assistance from the Big Lottery funded Man Matters project.

During MHW 2012, MHFI chose (for the second time) a theme which was different to England, Scotland or Wales. The local focus upon 'first instinct' was determined and agreed by the all-island MHW Planning Group, and was inclusive enough to secure the interest and engagement of a diverse range of organisations in MHW activity.

Overall, MHW 2012 proved to be very successful ...

- There was a broad base of engagement from across the whole island of Ireland, and this was a very positive aspect of the week - which also entailed a vast amount of voluntary input from many individuals and organisations.
- MHFI was able to draw upon the support of the HSE, Man Matters, and the Institute of Public Health in Ireland to enable it to offer both a coordinating role during MHW and support for a diverse spectrum of activities.
- The MHFI Planning Sub-Group worked effectively together, and fulfilled all of the tasks set for it, including: determining the theme for MHW 2012; setting appropriate aims and objectives; identifying potential members for an all-island Planning Group; participating in the Planning Group; acting as the executive of this body; designing and delivering realistic actions on behalf of MHFI; steering developments on behalf of MHFI; reporting back to the MHFI Board of Trustees.

- MHFI set itself clearly identified roles for MHW 2012 (i.e. promoter, coordinator, educator, animateur, convenor, prompter, signposter and quartermaster), and sought to kick start the engagement process for others - rather than acting as a direct service delivery body for men. As in MHW 2011, this proved to be a realistic, sustainable and appropriate strategy, which allowed MHFI to play a unique role within the constraints of its own limited assets and capabilities.

- The involvement of the temporary MHFI Director of Operations was important to the overall success of the week. This person acted as the coordinator, convenor, administrator, executive officer, policy worker, webmaster, media liaison person, development officer and contact point for MHW 2012.

- The key messages for MHW 2012 were clear and concise, and targeted / reached policy makers, opinion formers, service providers, community activists, the general public, and males themselves.

- All of the nine objectives that the MHFI Planning Sub-Group determined for MHW 2012 were met and, in many cases, exceeded. For example ...
 - i. **Convene and administer an all-island Planning Group:** This body included 40 diverse organisations from across the whole of Ireland, and met three times (as well as conducting ongoing business via email) to help to shape MHW 2012. Members also used their own agency's networks / resources to promote MHW, developed on-the-ground activity, and worked in partnership with each other outside of the meetings.

 - ii. **Design and produce promotional materials:** MHFI oversaw the design and production of a range of new MHW graphics and promotional materials (logos, banners, web images and posters) which were offered online (for free and in a variety of sizes and formats to suit all media) to anyone who wished to raise awareness of the week or to be associated with it. These provided a unique 'brand' for MHW 2012 and were very widely utilised. This was the first year that MHFI had used a QR Code on the posters, and this proved to be a very successful means to direct viewers to further information.

- iii. **Research, collate and disseminate a briefing paper:** MHFI prepared and circulated a Briefing Paper to everyone on its mailing list (including media outlets), as well as making this available for online downloading. This document provided answers to the most common questions that anyone might ask about MHW 2012, and offered a 'common hymn sheet' for all partners. It also informed the media that although MHW in Ireland shares some of the same characteristics / core goals as other countries, the theme for each year can and does differ. This has, historically, been a common misunderstanding.
- iv. **Collate a document on 'what can I do to mark this week':** A short paper was produced which offered simple and practical suggestions on how to get involved in MHW 2012. This was circulated to everyone on the MHFI mailing list, and was made available online. The paper highlighted realistic ways that organisations can make MHW fit with their own work, and helped them to visualise how they might be involved.
- v. **Increase awareness of MHW 2012:** MHFI updated and consolidated its media and organisational mailing lists; utilised its social and electronic media (Facebook and Twitter sites); encouraged Planning Group partners to use their contacts and dissemination mechanisms to amplify exposure; ensured a high level of media coverage of the week. All of these tasks were successfully completed, and showed a marked increase on MHW 2011. The only weak area was the low level of television coverage achieved.
- vi. **Provide a free, easy to access, online information hub:** MHFI created and maintained a new MHW 2012 section on its website, and used the Home Page, News Page and Latest News scrolling banner on this site to raise awareness of the most recent developments. The website witnessed a steady increase in traffic in the lead-up to MHW and, by June 2012: the number of unique visitors had increased by 433%; the number of visits to the site was up by 600%; the number of web pages viewed had increased by 591%.

- vii. **Promote the details of MHW activity and events:** MHFI invited organisations throughout Ireland to submit details of their MHW activities for inclusion in an e-booklet. This content was also regularly promoted in the Forum's 'E-Male Matters' newsletter as well as via other online communications media. To ensure maximum accessibility, there were four mechanisms for submission of information. These ranged from a newly-designed online registration form to traditional 'snail mail'.

- viii. **Offer a signposting service to sources of support, information and resources:** In the lead-up to MHW, MHFI offered a 'signposting service' to organisations looking for ideas / resources / information / contacts ... to facilitate their involvement in the week. In total, 72 requests were dealt with.

- ix. **Support for other small scale and affordable actions:** MHFI sought to support (where possible) small scale and affordable actions / projects which could promote or add value to MHW 2012. The Forum did this via soliciting support for MHW from regional bodies, directing local groups to available funding / resources, helping organisations to network with similar projects, and working in partnership with other agencies to plan and deliver a range of events and activities.

Based upon a review of activity and achievements during MHW 2012, the following recommendations are made for future weeks ...

- MHW should continue to be an all-island celebration of men's health.

- Funding is required to ensure that MHW can have the maximum impact. An application to support MHW 2013 should be submitted to the HSE, and Man Matters should be asked to offer at least similar levels of resources during MHW 2013.

- For MHW to be successful, there needs to be a core worker dedicated to coordinating partnerships, on-the-ground activity, communication and publicity. This post has an administrative, executive, and developmental function. They also provide a focal / reference point for the diverse range of interested parties throughout Ireland.

- MHFI should appoint a Planning Sub-Group to oversee MHW 2013.
- The clearly defined roles that MHFI played during MHW 2012 were both realistic and appropriate. It is proposed that these should be re-adopted for MHW 2013.
- The support of the Public Health Agency during MHW 2012 - in terms of making all staff aware of MHW - created new interest, and added extra legitimacy to the week. This buy-in should be sought next year, and a similar request made to the HSE.
- Although the request to the President of Ireland to help launch the MHW posters was unsuccessful, feedback from his office suggested that this was merely due to his busy schedule and the lateness of the invitation. In 2013, MHFI should seek his involvement at the earliest opportunity.
- The theme for MHW 2013 in Ireland needs to be determined by late 2012 - to allow enough time for thoughtful and thorough preparations. Some media outlets (e.g. 'Nationwide') indicated that they need 4-5 months lead-in time to schedule coverage of the week.
- All of the nine objectives set for MHW 2012 would be equally relevant to MHW 2013 and should, therefore, be pursued next year. However, there are a number of issues which should also be considered ...
 - ✓ Most organisations that participated in the all-Ireland Planning Group appreciated the convenience of using video-conferencing between Dublin and Belfast as the means of conducting meetings. They felt that this should be continued in 2013. However, while functional, this method of communication certainly lessens the building of inter-personal relationships between members, and there were some technical difficulties to overcome.
 - ✓ The MHW 2013 poster and image pack needs to be designed, agreed, and produced as early as possible. The QR Code this year proved to be very successful and should be continued. Feedback received on the posters was extremely positive about the use of an 'ordinary man' image on it.

- ✓ The MHW Briefing Paper offers a common script for partners, media and the public to find out the essential information about the week. This should be updated and reproduced for 2013.
- ✓ Many organisations now know that there is such a thing as Men's Health Week, and realise that they should be involved in it. However, most need prompted to see that it is something that they can easily fit into their existing priorities and strategic work plan. The "what can I do to mark this week?" paper helps to bridge this gap, and should, once again, be updated for 2013.
- ✓ While MHW 2012 received a very substantial amount of media coverage, this did not include much television air time. One reason offered for this by TV journalists / producers was that the focus of MHW needs to be either a 'shock / horror' story (e.g. all Irish men doomed to die before the age of 50) and/or have a very narrow focus (e.g. upsurge of testicular cancer among young men living in the Midlands). Newspapers, magazines, radio, and online media have much more time and space to fill. Therefore, they are prepared to address a broader range of subjects. The Planning Group needs to determine whether chasing TV coverage is worth the potential cost of doing so.
- ✓ MHFI's online promotion of MHW in the lead-up to and during the week proved to be extremely successful. This should be expanded during 2013 - especially the social media dimensions.
- ✓ Despite MHFI introducing a myriad of means to submit details of events and activities taking place during MHW 2012, the collated booklet only reflects a small percentage of what actually happened throughout Ireland. This is an area that needs to be addressed during 2013.
- ✓ During MHW 2012, the MHFI website struggled to cope with the volume of traffic visiting it. On a number of occasions, the site either froze or crashed - because it had exceeded its bandwidth quota. To ensure that this does not happen again in 2013, MHFI should explore the options for a web hosting service which offers unlimited storage and bandwidth.

Appendix 1: MHW 2012 Briefing Paper

Why do we need to focus upon men's health issues and needs?

Men, on the island of Ireland, experience a disproportionate burden of ill-health and die too young ...

- Local men die, on average, almost five years younger than women do.
- Males have higher death rates than women for all of the leading causes of death.
- Poor lifestyles are responsible for a high proportion of chronic diseases.
- Late presentation to health services leads to a large number of problems becoming untreatable ...

Indeed, while many of these conditions are preventable, their prevalence among men may, in fact, rise in the future.

When is Men's Health Week (MHW)?

Men's Health Week (MHW) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. This year, it will run from Monday 11th until Sunday 17th June 2012.

Where is MHW celebrated?

MHW is celebrated in most European countries, as well as in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and a number of other places worldwide.

What are the aims of MHW?

Internationally, the core aims of MHW each year are to ...

- ❑ Heighten awareness of preventable health problems for males of all ages.
 - ❑ Support men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices / activities.
 - ❑ Encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males.
-

Is there a specific theme this year?

Each year, individual countries focus upon a specific theme. The theme for 2012 in Ireland is: *"Men's Health - What's Your First Instinct ... Fight? Flight? Find Out?"*

This is different to the theme in England and Wales - which will focus upon heart health.



MEN'S HEALTH WEEK
MONDAY 11 - SUNDAY 17 JUNE 2012

Why 'First Instinct'?

Human beings start out life with a pre-disposition for self-preservation. This 'first instinct' drives them to eat, keep fit, be active, ensure personal safety, look after themselves, work collectively, tend to injuries etc.

However, over time - especially in Western societies - it is easy to become complacent, lazy, individualistic, neglectful, isolated, lonely ... and, consequently, for health (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) to suffer.

This year's MHW will focus upon encouraging and developing a 'first instinct' in males which is to actively seek help, advice, support, and to act quickly in times of difficulty / crisis / ill health rather than ignoring symptoms, turning to alcohol, 'soldiering on', taking their own life ...

What were the themes for MHW in previous years?

Previous MHWs in Ireland have focused upon ...

- 2005 - Obesity
- 2006 - Mental Well-Being
- 2007 - Long-term Conditions
- 2008 - Health in the Workplace
- 2009 - Access to Services
- 2010 - Physical Activity
- 2011 - Supporting Men and Boys through Challenging Times

Who is the target audience?

The purpose of MHW is to draw attention to the health and well-being issues affecting men and boys, and to encourage / promote personal, structural and systemic change where possible. This, therefore, implies that any messages and engagement needs to target:

- ❑ Males themselves
- ❑ Policy / decision-makers
- ❑ Service providers
- ❑ Public awareness and preconceptions



Who can be involved in this week?

MHW gives everyone (health professionals, service providers, youth groups, sporting bodies, community organisations, employers, policy makers, family workers, the media, parents, individuals ...) an opportunity to encourage men and boys to take better care of their health and to seek help or treatment at an early stage.

How can my organisation be involved?

Absolutely everyone can do something to support and celebrate MHW 2012. The focus for this year (i.e. 'First Instinct') lends itself to a wide range of ways to mark this occasion. However, anything which encourages men and boys to lead healthier lifestyles, to be more aware of preventable health problems, and to seek early detection and treatment for health difficulties is very welcome.

A range of practical ideas for how you or your organisation can be involved in MHW 2012 can be found online at: www.mhfi.org/mhw2012celebrateit.pdf

Are there any ways that I can promote the week?

There is a common logo / image pack which can be used by everyone who wishes to raise awareness of the week. There is also a MHW 2012 poster. These are important promotional tools - as one of the key aims is to let as many people as possible know about the week. These are available, free, to anyone who wishes to use them. See www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-image-pack.html for more details.

Promotion of MHW could take the form of:

- Putting-up a poster.
 - Advertising MHW on your own website.
 - Linking to the MHW 2012 website (www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html).
 - Sending an email to everyone in your contacts list about Men's Health Week and asking them to forward the message.
 - Becoming a fan of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland's Facebook site (www.facebook.com/MensHealthForumIreland) and sending the link to all your online friends.
 - Inserting the MHW logo into your outgoing emails.
 - Including information in your mailouts / newsletters.
 - Telling others about what is happening in your area during MHW by posting details on the MHW website.
 - Reminding your colleagues to follow all the latest MHW news on Twitter (www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL).
 - Encouraging the men you know to get involved in some of the activities taking place around the country ...
-

Who has planned Men's Health Week 2012 in Ireland?

MHW in Ireland has been planned by a broad range of partners who contributed to an inter-agency Planning Group. This body met, and had ongoing communication with each other, between February and May 2012. It was convened and coordinated by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI). MHFI works alongside other Men's Health Fora worldwide to focus attention upon male health issues.

The theme for this year's MHW (i.e. First Instinct) offers an opportunity for a very wide range of agencies to participate. Indeed, the planning process for 2012 drew upon the insight, expertise, support and contacts of individuals from ...

Amen	Medical Students' Committee in Northern Ireland
ARK (Queen's University and University of Ulster)	Men Alone in No-mans-land
Belfast Community Sports Development Network	Men As Learners and Elders
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	Men's Action Network
British Medical Association NI	Men's Development Network
Community.ie	Men's Health Forum in Ireland
Fír Le Cheile (Men Together)	Mental Health Ireland
Football Association of Ireland	National Youth Council of Ireland
Gaelic Athletic Association	Northern Health and Social Care Trust
Inspire Ireland	Northern Ireland Association for Mental Health
Health Service Executive, Dublin / North East	Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke
Irish Cancer Society	Safefood
Irish Football Association	Samaritans
Irish Heart Foundation	Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Irish Men's Sheds Forum	Sport Northern Ireland
Irish Rugby Football Union	Sure Start Fathers' Network
Irish Sports Council	Trinity College Dublin
Man Alive	Ulster Cancer Foundation
Man Matters Project	Western Health and Social Care Trust
Marie Keating Foundation	YouthAction Northern Ireland



What is the Men's Health Forum in Ireland?

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) is a diverse network of individuals and organisations, men and women, from both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The Forum was established in 1999, and operates on an all-island basis. At present, it has one temporary self-employed worker, but is, primarily, structured, organised and run using the expertise, resources and enthusiasm of volunteers.

MHFI is a charitable organisation which is registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee. The Forum seeks to promote all aspects of the health and well being of men and boys on the island of Ireland through research, training, networking, practical health initiatives and advocacy. It is managed by a Board of Trustees.

One of MHFI's core areas of work is the coordination of Men's Health Week (MHW) activity on the island of Ireland each year. More details can be found at: www.mhfi.org

How can I find out more about MHW?

To find out more about MHW 2012, contact ...

Colin Fowler
Director of Operations
Men's Health Forum in Ireland
Tel: 0044 751 9945261
Email: colin@mhfi.org

or visit ...

Website: www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html
Facebook: www.facebook.com/MensHealthForumIreland
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/MensHealthIRL>

**WHAT'S YOUR
FIRST INSTINCT?**



MEN'S HEALTH WEEK
MONDAY 11 - SUNDAY 17 JUNE 2012

Appendix 2: What can I do to Mark this Week?

Absolutely everyone can do something to support and celebrate Men's Health Week (MHW) 2012 ...

The focus for this year (i.e. '[Men's Health - What's Your First Instinct?](#)') lends itself to a wide range of ways to mark this occasion. However, you don't have to stick rigidly to this particular topic. Anything which encourages men and boys to lead healthier lifestyles, to be more aware of preventable health problems, and to seek early detection and treatment for health difficulties will be very welcome!

In Ireland, there is a common logo and an image pack which can be used by anyone who wishes to raise awareness of MHW and/or to be associated with it. We also have a MHW 2012 poster. All of these images are available for free downloading online at: www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-image-pack.html

These are important promotional tools, as one of the key aims of MHW is to let as many people as possible (especially men) know about the week, when it will happen, and how they can get involved.

Even if you don't have a lot of time, energy or resources to give to MHW, there are still some really easy (and free) ways that you can show your support.

These include:

- Putting a [MHW poster](#) (or two) up in your workplace / meeting space / community centre / local shop / home ...
- Promoting the week on your website - using a copy of the [MHW logo](#) and/or [web banner](#).
- Linking to the Men's Health Forum in Ireland's website page devoted to Men's Health Week 2012 (www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html) from your own website, Facebook page or other social networking site.
- Sending an email to everyone in your contacts list to tell them about Men's Health Week, and asking them to forward the message to all their contacts.
- Becoming a fan of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland's Facebook site (www.facebook.com/MensHealthForumIreland) and sending the link to all your online friends.

- Inserting the MHW logo into your outgoing emails for the months of May and June.
- Including information on MHW in your mailouts / newsletters.
- Telling others about what is happening in your area during MHW by posting details on the MHFI website (use the form at: www.mhfi.org/how-to-promote-your-mens-health-week-event.html).
- Making the MHW logo your computer desktop 'wallpaper' during May and June.
- Reminding your colleagues to follow all the latest MHW news on Twitter (www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL).
- Encouraging the men you know to get involved in some of the activities taking place during MHW 2012 ...

However, even more is possible! If you're a ...

- **HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDER** why not produce a men's health leaflet, or offer men's health (MOT / NCT) checks, or run a men's health campaign in your area, or consult with local men about what services they need, or give free pedometers to men, or ...?
- **COMMUNITY / VOLUNTARY GROUP** why not start-up a walking group, or organise a healthy eating cookery class, or form a men's health group, or launch a men's swimming / cycling club, or get your local leisure centre / gym to offer a free pass to men during MHW, or collate and display a list of local Helplines / support services for men, or ...?
- **SPORTING BODY** why not use your unique position (as many men like sport already) to give out men's health information at games, or get local men to join-in training sessions, or ask your best known player to give a men's health talk, or develop forms of your game which older men can participate in, or use the European Championships this Summer to motivate men to get fit / take up a sport, or ...?
- **LOCAL POLITICIAN / POLICY MAKER** why not table a debate on men's health in the Northern Ireland Assembly / Dáil Éireann / local council chamber, or set-up an inter-party group on men's health, or host a men's health seminar in your constituency, or propose a party policy on men's health, or look at how elements of the Men's Health Policy in the Republic of Ireland could be introduced to Northern Ireland, or explore the extent of inequalities in health, or set your department the goal of tackling a specific men's health issue over the coming year, or have a look at some of the evidence about men's health status (at www.mhfi.org/research-statistics-policy-and-reports.html) or ...?
- **EMPLOYER** why not organise health checks for men in your workplace, or set-up a regular game of football before / after work, or invite speakers to come in and give talks on specific aspects of men's health, or produce your own workplace guide to men's health, or offer an hour off to your employees to attend a men's health event, or ...?

- **OTHER SERVICE PROVIDER** why not display men's health information in your public spaces, or direct your service users to men's health programmes, or provide a room and administrative support for a local men's health initiative, or think about helping to start a '[Men's Shed](#)' or ...?
- **MEDIA PERSON** why not cover MHW 2012 in your publication / programme, or research and produce an in-depth special report on a specific men's health issue, or promote the work of a local men's health project, or run a series of features on men's health during MHW 2012, or ...?
- **WOMAN** why not encourage the man / men in your life (partner, father, brother, uncle, grandfather, neighbour, friend, colleague etc.) to take part in one of the MHW events, or to see their GP about that niggling health concern, or to join a men's health group, or ...?
- **MAN** why not take a few minutes to look at the state of your own health, and make MHW 2012 the start date for a new beginning!!! ...

**WHAT'S YOUR
FIRST INSTINCT?**



MEN'S HEALTH WEEK
MONDAY 11 - SUNDAY 17 JUNE 2012

Appendix 3: Press Release in English

“Stall the Ball - Men’s Health for All” *Launch of Men’s Health Week 2012 in Ireland*

Men in Ireland are often accused of being forgetful; especially when it comes to remembering significant dates such as birthdays and anniversaries. However, while this might sometimes be true, there’s a date that all men need to know about - as it could help to save their life! This date is Monday 11th - Sunday 17th June 2012, also known as International Men’s Health Week.

European Football Championship fever is in the air. Men across the country are planning their viewing schedules (possibly even their working hours), stockpiling enough refreshments to see them through a nuclear winter, and making arrangements with their friends for the common sharing of this four-yearly experience.

Many men are knowledgeable about what lies ahead. They know which teams have got through to this stage; who is in each group; what days and times countries will be playing; what the bookies’ odds are for each team to win; which players are likely to be the stars of the competition ...

Euro 2012 has created a common bond among many men. They have a reason to be in each other’s company. They are well informed by the media about what lies ahead. They are prepared to give their opinions and stand out from the crowd. They are motivated and excited. They are enthusiastic and want to be involved. They are likely to show more emotion than usual.

Michael Lynch, Chairperson of the Men’s Health Forum in Ireland (which coordinates Men’s Health Week on the island of Ireland), comments:

“These are traits that we don’t often associate with Irish males. However, we need to ‘stall the ball’ for a minute. Despite all this focus on men, few people (male or female) are aware of what men’s health needs are, when Men’s Health Week is or, indeed, why we even need such a week in the first place”.

So, why should we focus upon men's health? Well, put simply, men, on the island of Ireland, experience a disproportionate burden of ill-health and die too young:

- Local men die, on average, almost five years younger than women do.
- Males have higher death rates than women for all of the leading causes of death and at all ages.
- Poor lifestyles are responsible for a high proportion of chronic diseases.
- Late presentation to health services leads to a large number of problems becoming untreatable ...

The high level of premature mortality amongst men in Ireland has far-reaching repercussions. It affects not only industry and commerce, but also impacts upon the social and financial positions of families - through the loss of what is still, in many households, the primary income earner. However, this is not a 'lost cause' - research shows that preventable risk factors account for a high proportion of male illnesses. Therefore, we can all take positive action to do something about this situation.

Men's Health Week provides an annual opportunity for everyone to do their bit to improve the health of local men. Each year, there is a focus upon a specific theme. The theme for 2012 in Ireland is: "*Men's Health - What's Your First Instinct ... Fight? Flight? Find Out?*"

Human beings start out life with a pre-disposition for self-preservation. This 'first instinct' drives them to eat well, keep fit, be active, ensure personal safety, look after themselves, work collectively, and tend to injuries. However, over time - especially in Western societies - it is easy to become complacent, individualistic, isolated, lonely ... and, consequently, for health (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) to suffer.

As Michael Lynch adds:

"This year, the focus of Men's Health Week is upon developing a 'First Instinct' in males which is to actively seek help, advice, support, and to act quickly in times of difficulty, crisis or ill health. We are encouraging men to choose the 'find out' option rather than to ignore symptoms, turn to alcohol, 'soldier on' or take their own life when faced with problems".

Editor's Notes:

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 - Finian Murray (**Kells**), Tel: 00353 46 9280644, Mobile: 00353 87 2038790, Email: finian.murray@hse.ie
 - Michael Lynch (**Derry / Londonderry**), Tel: 0044 2871 377777, Mobile: 0044 790 3619511, Email: man_in_derry@yahoo.co.uk
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 - Paul Gillen (**Galway**), Tel: 00353 91 548323, Email: paul.gillen@hse.ie
- Men's Health Week (www.mhfi.org/international-mens-health-week.html) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. This year, it will run from Monday 11th until Sunday 17th June 2012. It is celebrated in most European countries, as well as in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and a number of other places worldwide.
- The core aims each year are to: heighten awareness of preventable health problems for males of all ages; support men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices / activities; encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males.
- Each year, individual countries focus upon a specific theme. The theme for 2012 in Ireland is: "Men's Health - What's Your First Instinct ... Fight? Flight? Find Out?"
- The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (www.mhfi.org) is a charity which works on an all-Ireland basis to enhance the health of men and boys. It is a voluntary network of individuals and organisations, men and women, which seeks to identify the key concerns relating to male health and to increase understanding of these issues. Every year, the Forum coordinates Men's Health Week activity on the island of Ireland.
- Men's Health Week 2012 in Ireland has been planned by a broad range of partners who contributed to an inter-agency, all-island Planning Group.
- Links to some of the most important pieces of information are available online ...
 - Full overview of Men's Health Week 2012: www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html
 - Briefing paper which answers all the most common questions: www.mhfi.org/mhw2012briefing.pdf
 - Men's Health Week posters and images: www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-image-pack.html
 - Practical suggestions on how organisations can get involved: www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html#Mark
 - Events list: www.mhfi.org/mhw2012events.pdf
 - Latest developments: www.facebook.com/MensHealthForumIreland and www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL

Appendix 4: Press Release in Irish

Sláinte na bhFear do gach duine Seoladh - Seachtain Sláinte na bhFear in Éirinn 2012

Cuirtear i leith fir na hÉireann go bhfuil siad dearmadach, go mór mhór i gcás dátaí tábhachtacha ar nós breithlaethanta agus comóradh ócáidí éagsúla. B'fhéidir go bhfuil an fhirinne anseo anois is arís ach tá dáta tábhachtach amháin ann nach mór do gach fear a bheith ar an eolas faoi – mar go mb'fhéidir go sábhálfadh an dáta seo a shaol! Dé Luain go dtí Dé Domhnaigh 11-17 Meitheamh, 2012, sin é Seachtain Idirnáisiúnta Sláinte na bhFear.

Tá gach duine ar bís faoi Chraobhchomórtas Peile na hEorpa Tá fir ar fud na tíre ag pleanáil na cluichí a bheidh siad ag féachaint orthu (fiú le linn uaireanta oibre b'fhéidir). Beidh neart le n-ithe agus le n-ól réidh acu, shílfeá go raibh gorta nó triomach ag teacht, agus beidh siad ag déanamh socruithe chun bualadh lena gcairde i gcomhair na cluichí seo nach dtarlaíonn ach chuile cheithre bliana.

Tá gach eolas ag na fir faoin rud atá le teacht. Tá fhios acu go maith cén staid atá ag na foirne ar fad, cé atá i ngach ngrúpa, cén lá agus cad iad na tíortha a bheith ag imirt, cén praghas atá ag na geallghlacadóirí orthu, cé h-iad na h-imreoirí is fearr sa gcraobh ...

Tá dlúth cheangail cruthaithe ag Euro 2012 i measc na bhfir. Tá údar acu a bheith i gcomhlúadar lena chéile. Tá gach eolas acu ó na meáin faoi chuile shórt a bheidh ag tarlú. Tá siad lán sásta a dtuairimí a thabhairt go neamhspleách. Tá siad spreagtha agus ar bís mar gheall air. Tá siad lán le fuinneamh agus dúil acu páirt a ghlacadh ann. Léireoidh siad i bhfad níos mó mothúcháin ná mar a léiríonn de ghnáth.

Dar le Michael Lynch ó Fhóram Sláinte na bhFear in Éireann (fóram a dhéanann co-ordú ar Sheachtain Shláinte na bhFear ar oileán na hÉireann):

***'Ní mheastar go mbaineann na tréithe seo le fir na hÉireann.'* Ach, fan tamall. In ainneoin an bhéim seo atá ar na fir, is beag duine (fir ná mná) atá ar an eolas faoi riachtanais sláinte na bhfear, cén uair a mbíonn Seachtain Sláinte na bhFear ar siúl agus /nó cén fáth a theastaíonn a leithéid ar chor ar bith.'**

Mar sin, cén fáth ar cheart dúinn béim a leagan ar Shláinte na bhFear? Mar go bunúsach, tá níos mó drochshláinte ar fhir i gcomparáid leis na mná agus tá fir ag fáil bháis ró-óg ar oileán na hÉireann,

- Ar an meán, faigheann na fir bás cúig bliana roimh na mná in Éirinn.
- Tá rátaí báis níos airde ag fir le h-ais na mná i gcomhair na príomh cúiseanna báis ar fad.
- Droch nósanna maireachtála is cúis le go leor de na galair ainsealacha seo.
- Bíonn drogál orthu dul go dtí na seirbhísí sláinte agus faoin am a théann siad ann, bíonn go leor de na fadhbanna sláinte dochóireáilte.

Tá droch thoradh forleathan ann de bharr ráta báis na bhfir óga a chailltear in Éirinn a bheith chomh h-ard. Cuireann sé isteach ar thionscail agus gnó na tíre ach freisin cuireann sé isteach ar chúrsaí ioncaim agus shóisialta na dteaghlaigh- cheal ioncam an phríomh-shaothraí mar atá cúrsaí fós i bhformhór na dteaghlaigh. Níl an cath seo caillte áfach. Léiríonn taighde gur féidir rioscaí formhór na ngalar fir seo a sheachaint. Mar sin, is féidir linn ar fad gníomhú go dearfach chun rud éigin a dhéanamh faoi seo.

Deis bliantúil is ea Seachtain Sláinte na bhFear ionas go mbeidh gach duine in ann a gcuid a dhéanamh ar mhaithe le sláinte na bhfear go h-áitiúil. Chuile bhliain bíonn béim ar théama ar leith. Is é téama na bliana 2012 in Éirinn ná: 'Sláinte na bhFear – Cén mothúchán a bhuaileann i dtosach tú.... Troid? Teitheadh? Ceist a chur?

Tá claonadh féin-shlánú sa duine daonna ó thús a shaol. Gríosaíonn an chéad instinn fir chun ithe go maith, coinneáil aclaí, a bheith gníomhach agus slán, aire a thabhairt dóibh féin, oibriú le chéile agus aire a thabhairt do ghortaithe. Le h-imeacht ama áfach, go mór mhór sna sochaí san Iarthair – tá sé éasca luí ar na maidí – mé féineachais – aonraic, uaigneach ... agus mar thoradh ar sin, goileann sé ar ár shláinte fhisiciúil, mhothúchánach agus spioradálach.

Dar le Michael Lynch:

I mbliana, tá Seachtain Sláinte na bhFear ag díriú ar 'an Chéad Instinn' na bhfear – dul ag lorg cabhair, comhairle, tacaíocht, agus gníomhú láithreach nuair atá deacrachtaí, cruachás nó droch-shláinte ag bagairt orthu. Tá muid ag impí ar fhir a dhul agus a fháil amach faoi chúrsaí sláinte seachas neamh aird a thabhairt ar chomharthaí, dul ar an ól, 'coinneáil orthu' nó lámh a chur ina mbáis féin nuair atá fadhbanna ag goilliúint orthu.

Deireadh – nótaí eagarthóra ar lean
NÓTA DON EAGARTHÓIR

Tá tuilleadh eolais ar fáil ó:

- Colin Fowler (**Belfast**), Mobile: 0044 751 9945261, Email: colin@mhfi.org
- Finian Murray (**Kells**), Tel: 00353 46 9280644, Mobile: 00353 87 2038790, Email: finian.murray@hse.ie

Appendix 5: Men's Health Week 2012 - Online Promotion of Events

Men's Health Week (MHW) will run from Monday 11th June until Sunday 17th June this year. The theme for MHW 2012 is: 'Men's Health - What's your First Instinct ... Fight? Flight? Find Out?'



The theme for the week lends itself to a wide range of ways to mark this occasion, and you don't have to stick rigidly to this particular topic. Anything which encourages men and boys to lead healthier lifestyles, to be more aware of preventable health problems, to seek early detection and treatment for health difficulties, and to access help and support will be welcome!

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) has created a special section on its website (www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2012.html) to promote the details of any activities or events that will be held throughout Ireland. This will help everyone to find out what is happening during the week, and to get details on how to join in. We also hope that this site will give some profile and recognition to all those groups across Ireland that are doing something for and with men.

Your activity might be health checks, or a conference, or a launch, or a game, or a seminar, or a competition, or a workshop, or a lunch, or a course, or a drama, or a display, or a health fair ...



Whatever it is, if you would like to have the details included on our website, please complete as much of the form below as is appropriate to you. Then return it to us as soon as possible. Alternatively, you may prefer to submit your details using our online form which can be found at: www.mhfi.org/how-to-promote-your-mens-health-week-event.html

Name of Event / Activity:

Date:

Start / Finish Time:

Venue / Location:

Name of Organisation Running Event / Activity:

Brief Description of the Event / Activity - Maximum 150 Words [What it will involve. Who it is for etc.] ...

Is there an Entry Fee?:

Contact Person:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Website Address:

Please post this form to: Michael Lynch, Men's Action Network, 40 Carlisle Road, Derry / Londonderry BT48 6JW
or email to: menshealthweek@mhfi.org

Appendix 6:

MHW 2012 Events Promoted by MHFI

In the lead-up to Men's Health Week (MHW) 2012, the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) invited organisations throughout the island of Ireland to submit details of any events or activities that they were planning for inclusion in an online booklet titled: "What's Happening Across Ireland?" (see www.mhfi.org/mhw2012events.pdf for a copy). The purpose of this invitation was to create a central inventory of at least some activities happening during MHW, where they would take place, and how to join in.

The entries in this publication were:

Just before Men's Health Week 2012 ...

- Annual Gay Health Forum [Dublin]
- Framework for Men's Health Training [Lurgan, Co. Armagh]
- Launch of Sexual Health of Young People in Northern Ireland Reports [Northern Ireland-wide]
- Sligo General Hospital Men's Health Events [Sligo]

Throughout the whole of Men's Health Week ...

- Action Man Campaign [Northern Ireland-wide]
- A Man's Guide to Heart Health [Republic of Ireland-wide]
- Foyleside Men's Health Week [Derry / Londonderry]
- Images of and Art by Men [Gorey, Co. Wexford]
- Into the West [Western Health and Social Care Trust area]
- Men's Health Week Exercise Promotion [Clonlara, Co. Clare]
- Niche Community Health Project's Men's Health Week [Cork City]
- West Limerick Primary Health Care Project for Travellers - Men's Health Initiative 2012 [West Limerick region]
- YouthAction Northern Ireland: Young Men Talking [Northern Ireland-wide]

Monday 11th June 2012 ...

- Men's Feel Good Morning [Dungannon and South Tyrone, Co. Tyrone]
- Putting Men's Health on the Agenda [Omagh, Co. Tyrone]

Tuesday 12th June 2012 ...

- ManAlive Conference: 'First Instinct - Find Out' [Armagh City]
- Men's Health Fair [Navan, Co. Meath]

Wednesday 13th June 2012 ...

- Belfast City Hall Men's Health Event [Belfast]
- Bonds Hill Open Day [Derry / Londonderry]
- Men's MOT and Annual Health Check [Lurgan, Co. Armagh]

Thursday 14th June 2012 ...

- 'Get Men Talking': Cancer Awareness Day for Men [Belmullet, Co. Mayo]
- Managing Employee Drug and Alcohol Use [Portlaoise, Co. Laois]
- Traveller Men's Health Matters [Ennis, Co. Clare]

Friday 15th June 2012 ...

- Challenges Engaging with Young Men [Belfast]
- FRC Claremorris - Health and Fitness Awareness [Claremorris, Co. Mayo]
- Fit Squad Bootcamp [Dublin]
- Just Carry One [Dublin]
- Website Design Workshop for Men's Groups [Northern Ireland-wide]

Saturday 16th June 2012 ...

- 25 Years of IVF Treatment at the Regional Fertility Centre [Belfast]
- Bike Week 2012 [Ireland-wide]
- HEparkruns! [Ballymena, Co. Antrim]
- Letterkenny Men's Health Day [Letterkenny, Co. Donegal]
- Sure Start United [Northern Ireland-wide]

Sunday 17th June 2012 ...

- Family Cycle and Picnic [Galway City]

Just after Men's Health Week 2012 ...

- Employee Health and Well-Being [Waterford City]
- From Shift Work to Shifting the Pounds - The Value of a Healthy Workforce [All-island event held in Belfast]
- Get on your Bike! [Western Health and Social Care Trust Area]
- Kick Fitness and Boot Camp [Bandon, Co. Cork]
- The Mojo Project [Dublin]
- Twelve Week Men's Health and Fitness Course [Bray, Co. Wicklow]
- University of Ulster Men's Health Checks [Coleraine and Jordanstown, Campuses]

