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## Second Meeting of the Men's Health Week (MHW) 2020 Planning Group

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**Date:** Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020  
**Time:** 11.00am - 1.40pm (including lunch)  
**Venue:** Armagh Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Dundalk, Co. Louth  
**Minute Taker:** Colin Fowler

**Present:**

Julie Aiken - Samaritans Ireland  
Lise Alford - 3Ts  
Lorcan Brennan - Men's Development Network (MDN)  
Annie Clarke - Southern Health and Social Care Trust  
Jim Curran - Irish Pharmacy Union (IPU)  
Cólleen Devine - Sport Ireland  
Alison Doake - South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT)  
Anne Farrell - CIE Group  
Helen Forristal - Marie Keating Foundation  
Colin Fowler - Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI)  
Seanna Gray - Male Menu  
Lisa Harold - National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)  
Frances Haughey - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
Leah King - Clanrye Group  
Finian Murray - Health Service Executive (HSE) Health Promotion and Improvement  
Lianne McAree Murphy - Irish Men's Sheds Association (IMSA)  
Margaret McDonald - Belfast Health and Social Care Trust Carers Support  
Michael McKenna - YouthAction NI Work with Young Men Team  
Eunan McKinney - Alcohol Action Ireland  
Muna Odeh - University of Brasilia  
Shauna O'Connor - See Change  
Kevin O'Hagan - Irish Cancer Society (ICS)  
Paul O'Kane - Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT)  
Tracey Powell - Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCT)  
Pamela Smyth - South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust Carers Support

**Apologies:**

Ryan Beacom - South West College  
Edel Byrne - Irish Men's Sheds Association (IMSA)  
Anne Corcoran - Samaritans Ireland  
Marese Damery - Irish Heart Foundation (IHF)  
Carrie Davenport - Shoot Positive  
Paula Devine - ARK  
Olive Fanning - HSE  
Sandra Gordon - Cancer Focus NI  
Paddy Hannigan - Donegal Education and Training Board  
Marita Hennessy - INFANT Centre, University College Cork  
Lucy Browe - Migraine Association of Ireland  
Michael Lynch - Men's Action Network  
Geoff McCarthy - Beacon of Light Counselling Centre  
Emma McCrudden - Northern Ireland Chest, Heart & Stroke (NICHs)

Niamh McDaid - Bowel Cancer UK  
Andrea McDermot - AnyMan  
Craig McHugh - Union of Students in Ireland  
Michael McKeon - Dublin City University (DCU) School of Nursing  
Kathryn Meade - HSE  
Andy O'Hara - Traveller Health Unit  
Roisin O'Hara - National Screening Service  
Emer O'Leary - HSE  
Patricia O'Neill - Clanrye Group  
William Purcell - Primal Paddy  
Sandra Semple - Western Health and Social Care Trust (WHSCT)  
Peter Shaw - Community Sports Network  
Darren Walker - Education Authority NI

## **AGENDA ITEMS ...**

### **1. Welcome and Overview**

Colin welcomed everyone to the meeting (particularly those people who had to make a long journey to be here and any 'new faces' to the group), and gave a brief overview of the housekeeping arrangements.

As at the last meeting, apologies were tendered from a broad range of organisations who were unable to make today's date, as well as from others who - due to the distance to travel - have committed to contributing remotely via email and telephone follow-up calls. The contribution of these people was both welcomed and acknowledged.

The meeting was reminded that membership of the Planning Group is open to anyone who wishes to contribute, and that everyone is welcome to invite other organisations to attend future meetings and/or to input electronically.

Colin highlighted that the purpose of today's meeting was to: (i) explore how to represent the theme; (ii) look at promotional materials; (iii) agree a social media strategy, and (iv) share ideas for local activities and events

### **2. Round of Introductions**

Paul invited everyone to introduce themselves - by way of helping to get to know each other and to understand the work that each person is involved in. Individuals were asked to:

- Give their name.
- Say which organisation that they represent and what it does.
- Briefly outline their interest in men's work.

### **3. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the Planning Group meeting held in November 2019 were accepted as an accurate reflection of that gathering. It was felt that there were no matters arising which would not be covered in the agenda for today.

#### 4. Refining the MHW 2020 Theme / Call to Action

At the first Planning Group meeting held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2019, there was consensus that we should focus upon the concept of achieving a healthy balance in men's lives during Men's Health Week (MHW) 2020. Ten suggestions were made for the call to action, and these were put to a vote - organised by Colin - wherein any contributor could nominate a shortlist of up to three of these options.

There was a great response to this poll, with 51 people submitting their preferences. Some people decided to only offer 1 or 2 choices, and quite a few said that they had also consulted with their work colleagues (so the actual number of people who inputted was higher than the 51 recorded).

The poll produced four strong contenders ...

- **Are you getting the balance right? - 27 votes**
- Have you got the balance right? - 4 votes
- Check your balance - 2 votes
- Find your balance - 7 votes
- **Get the balance right - 30 votes**
- How balanced are you? - 3 votes
- **Strike the right balance - 27 votes**
- What does balance mean to you? - 6 votes
- Are you juggling too much? - 3 votes
- **Too many balls in the air? - 26 votes**

These leading options then formed the short-list for the next round of voting, alongside another 'composite option' (number 5 below) which was suggested by 11 respondents ...

1. Are you getting the balance right?
2. Get the balance right
3. Strike the right balance
4. Too many balls in the air?
5. Too many balls in the air? ... Get the balance right

In this second poll, respondents were asked to only send their first preference vote. There was an even higher response rate to this poll - with 64 people submitting their choices. Once again, many of these people said that they had consulted with their work colleagues and/or friends and/or partners.

The results of the poll were ...

1. Are you getting the balance right? - 11 votes
2. **Get the balance right - 42 votes**
3. Strike the right balance - 0 votes
4. Too many balls in the air? - 1 vote
5. Too many balls in the air? ... Get the balance right - 10 votes

Thus, there was a clear winner in 'Get the Balance Right' and there was no need for a further round of voting. As someone commented: *'get the balance right applies to everyone e.g. policy makers, service providers, men, activists, organisations, the public ...'* Consequently, the call to action was determined before Christmas.

## 5. Publicity and Resource Materials

Finian reminded everyone that there is only a very limited budget for the design and printing of graphics and publicity materials for MHW 2020, and that we rely heavily upon pro bono input, goodwill, and partnership working to get these resources both produced and disseminated. This, therefore, needs to be kept in mind when determining our requirements.

### A. Representing the Theme:

'Get the balance right' is relevant to many areas of life, and there are a lot of things which can put us off balance e.g. health, work, family, money, relationships, diet, exercise, friendships, mental health etc. It was agreed that when determining an image to represent this, we need to ...

- Be cognisant of the fact that with any balancing situation there is a degree of risk involved.
- Highlight the need for support from others.
- Ensure that the image is simple, straightforward, clear and unambiguous.

It was discussed how this concept could be represented as ...

- A see-saw - with the word 'health' on one side and 'work / family / money etc'. on the other.
- A 'word cloud' in the shape of a man.
- A man walking a tightrope - with a safety net below.
- A father supporting his son to walk along a wall / across a road.
- Using a zebra crossing (e.g. 'Abbey Road' type shot).
- The iconic black and white image of the steel erectors having their break at the top of a New York skyscraper.
- A play on the 20 : 20 idea.
- Men striking a yoga pose.
- Males balancing on one foot.
- A mix of men cycling together and/or using tandem bikes.
- Stephen Roche and his son cycling.
- A 'paper chain' of male figures or stick men doing some of the above activities.
- A child learning to ride a bicycle.
- Irish gymnast - and Olympic hope - Rhys McClenaghan on the Pommel Horse.

It was agreed that our first choice would be to use an image of Rhys McClenaghan - on condition that we can get his permission to do so (as we wouldn't want a media person during the Tokyo Olympics to ask him about his association with Men's Health Week and he would know nothing about it). Seanna is friendly with Rhys' family, and will follow-up with them to see if Rhys would be prepared to do any / all / some of the following ...

- Let us take a photo of him balancing on the Pommel Horse (or give us a stock image to use).
- Formally associate himself with MHW 2020.
- Act as an 'Ambassador' for the week.
- Do a short video clip (on his phone) endorsing the need for MHW.

Seanna will follow this up as soon as possible and will liaise with Colin. If this is not possible or realistic, it was agreed that our 'Plan B' will be to take a photograph of a father teaching his child to ride a bike in a park (or similar location).

## **B. Resources:**

The core content for the MHW 2020 posters will be:

- Men's Health Week
- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June 2020
- Lead image
- Get the Balance Right
- Find out more at ...
- #MensHealthWeek
- QR Code

It was agreed that although there were two sizes of poster produced for MHW last year (A<sub>3</sub> and A<sub>4</sub>) the most useful ones were the A<sub>4</sub> size. Thus, only A<sub>4</sub> posters will be produced in hard copy this year - although A<sub>3</sub> ones (with a blank box for organisations to write in / stick a label on with the details of their own local events) will be produced for electronic download. It is anticipated that 5,000 - 6,000 A<sub>4</sub> posters will be printed.

For the past few years, MHW postcards (with the poster image on the front and a MHW message / place holder for inserting the recipient's address on the reverse) have also proven to be very popular. Some groups have used them interactively, by giving them to men to write their own personal MHW commitment / pledge on - as a takeaway reminder of the week. This increases the longevity of this resource by keeping MHW 'alive' and relevant for longer. 15,000 of these will be produced in 2020.

Colin will coordinate the drafting of the posters and postcards with the designer, and will seek feedback, via email, from Planning Group partners to help to shape the final products. It is also hoped that we can produce a few thousand MHW 2020 branded pens as 'giveaways' at events.

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland is, currently, negotiating with Haynes Publishing for the updating and re-printing of the 'Challenges and Choices' Man Manual. It is hoped to be able to produce 15,000 copies of this booklet for 2020. In previous years, these have flown off the shelves very quickly. Therefore, members of the Planning Group are strongly advised to place their orders for the Manuals (and other MHW resource materials) as soon as possible.

If there are any financial resources left over, we could look at producing a credit card size 'Z-Card' publication which draws upon the content in the Man Manual. This would have a longer lifespan than dedicated MHW materials.

## **C. Dissemination:**

Since there is no budget for distributing these publicity materials, all members of the Planning Group are asked to use their contacts / networks / influence to get these resources disseminated throughout the country. At the next (and final) meeting of the Planning Group, everyone present can collect their order from Colin.

## **D. Electronic Resources:**

As in previous years, the poster and postcard will also be made available in a range of electronic formats e.g. A<sub>3</sub> size, A<sub>4</sub> size, PDF, JPG, with a space to type / write in contact details for local events ... It will also be supported by an array of graphics e.g. MHW logo, banner, badge, Facebook image etc. All of these will be made available for free online downloading from the MHFI website at: [www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-image-pack.html](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-image-pack.html)

## **E. Other Publicity Materials / Mechanisms:**

The following ideas were suggested as additional publicity routes ...

- Infographics - on specific health topics.
- Video clips.
- Short animations.
- Podcasts from high profile people with a big following e.g. Bressie or The Blind Boy or The Two Johnnies ...
- Run a challenge involving balancing a paper cup / bucket of water on your head.

If anyone has a contact in these areas, or means to produce materials, we'd all love to hear from you!

## **6. Social Media Strategy**

During MHW 2019, the Planning Group agreed that it would be useful to:

- Determine a specific health theme to highlight on each day of MHW and the days leading up to it - to provide a focus for each day and move public discussion from general to specific health issues.
- Develop a core pool of social media Posts and Tweets on each theme which anyone can draw upon - especially as many people don't have the time, energy or knowledge to develop their own. Therefore, on each day of the week, it would be easy to cut-paste-post a set of ready-made material.
- Ask everyone we know to plug the themes / Posts / Tweets on the nominated days.
- Have a common hashtag.

A Sub-Group was established to spearhead the development of information for each of the thematic days, and a copy of the 2019 materials can be accessed at:  
[www.mhfi.org/Tweets2019.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/Tweets2019.pdf)

It was felt that this model had worked well, and should be built upon during 2020. Indeed, on the Monday of MHW 2019, Ireland led the way, worldwide, on social media about the week, and held the top 5 place on Twitter in Ireland for a few hours.

It was agreed that most of the themes should be adopted again this year, and that male carers should be inserted into the messaging where possible. A Sub-Group (comprised of Julie Aiken, Alison Doake, Colin Fowler and Paul O'Kane), was nominated to drive this action forward. The Sub-Group plan to ...

- Meet soon to draft the content for MHW 2020.
- Circulate this draft to the full Planning Group membership for feedback (to be received within no more than a week) and invite subject experts to strengthen this material.
- Finalise the content so that it can be circulated to the communications teams within statutory health services by the end of March 2020.

The main hashtag for last year worked well and will be adopted once again for 2020 i.e. #MenHealthWeek

## **7. Recording Details of Events**

Colin reminded everyone about the importance of recording the details of as many MHW events as possible - as each year there are hundreds of activities which take place throughout Ireland that go unnoticed and unrecognised.

The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) coordinates the collation and publication process, and there are three methods for registering events and activities: (i) online form; (ii) email attachment; and (iii) snail mail. All of these mechanisms will soon be available on MHFI's dedicated web page for MHW 2020. The final collated document tends to draw media attention to local activities.

All Planning Group participants are asked to submit the details of their own events - and to ask their networks to do likewise - as early as possible. It was suggested that a deadline should be set for submission, and this should be widely advertised.

## **8. Own Plans for MHW 2020**

Lorcan invited everyone to share their ideas for activities / events / happenings to mark MHW 2020 locally. These included ...

- Large and small scale events.
- Promoting workplace health.
- Men's health radio broadcasts for young men.
- Increasing awareness with male carers.
- Promoting the week via case studies, video clips and 'Ambassadors'.
- Social media posts and website features.
- Interviews on local radio stations.
- Alcohol awareness day and an event with the GAA on alcohol and sport.
- Information stands in public spaces.
- Dedicated infographic(s).
- Internal HSE campaign.
- Workshops focusing on the daily themes.
- Health checks for men.
- Walking and cycling activities.
- Football competitions.
- Nomination of Men's Health Champions in Health Trusts.
- Photography competition.
- Staff screen saver.
- Prison Health Fairs.
- Couch-to-5K events.
- Spinning classes.
- Engagement with BME community.
- Juggling and/or stand on one leg challenges.
- Men's Sheds events.
- Promotional campaign for network members.
- Journal articles.
- Community Health Fairs.
- Men's health talks.
- 'Active Leaders' programme.
- Producing podcasts.
- Men's health questionnaire ...

## **9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Planning Group will be held in the Diocesan Pastoral Centre, Dundalk, on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2020. It will begin at 11.00am sharp. Participants can collect their MHW materials (posters / postcards / pens / Man Manuals) at this gathering.