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## Second Meeting of the Men's Health Week (MHW) 2022 Planning Group

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**Date:** Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022  
**Time:** 2.00pm - 3.35pm  
**Mode:** 'Zoom' Video Conference  
**Minute Taker:** Colin Fowler

**Present:**

Julie Aiken - Samaritans Ireland [NI]  
Carey Baxter - Men's Alliance NI  
Kathrina Bentley - Men's Aid Ireland  
Deirdre Bigley - HeadsUp  
Sinead Brannigan - Waterford Sports Partnership  
Lorcan Brennan - Men's Development Network  
Somhairle Brennan - Union of Students in Ireland  
Emmett Breslin - Western Health and Social Care Trust  
Julie Bunch - Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council  
Annie Clarke - Southern Health and Social Care Trust  
Lorraine Conneely - Irish Men's Sheds Association  
Anne Corcoran - Samaritans Ireland [RoI]  
Jim Curran - Irish Pharmacy Union  
Clare Deasy - Health Service Executive  
Marie Dempsey - Marie Keating Foundation  
Brian Doyle - Dublin Fire Brigade  
Suzanne Dowd - Irish Cancer Society  
Anne Farrell - CIE  
Shauna Farrell - SISK Building Contractors  
Helen Forristal - Marie Keating Foundation  
Colin Fowler - Men's Health Forum in Ireland  
Konrad Im - Gay Project  
Ellen Jennings - Bodywhys  
Mark Kelly - Dudes and Dogs  
Stephen Lee - Arthritis Ireland  
Emily Lynch - Health Service Executive  
Maria McEnery - Cancer Control Programme  
Michael McKenna - YouthAction NI Work with Young Men Team  
Rebecca McLaughlin - Irish Men's Sheds Association  
Kathryn Meade - National Screening Service  
Finian Murray - Health Service Executive  
Rachel Nulty - See Change  
Shauna O'Connor - See Change / Green Ribbon  
Paul O'Kane - Belfast Health and Social Care Trust  
Sandra Semple - Western Health and Social Care Trust  
John [JT] Treanor - Irish Heart Foundation  
Bill Vaughan - Mental Health Ireland

**Apologies:**

Paul Anderson - Forever Fathers  
Carrie Davenport - Shoot Positive

Paula Devine - ARK  
Robert Glusek - Sure Start South Armagh  
Paddy Hannigan - Donegal Education and Training Board  
Frances Haughey - Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council  
Marita Hennessy - INFANT Centre, University College Cork  
Conor Higgins - Roscommon County Traveller Health Project  
Caroline Hughes - Action Cancer  
Jason King - Get Ireland Walking  
Emma McCrudden - Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke  
Barry Murphy - Bodywhys  
Deirdre Ní Mhórdha - Migraine Association of Ireland  
Kevin O'Driscoll - National Youth Council of Ireland  
Tracey Powell - Southern Health and Social Care Trust  
Peter Shaw - Community Sports Network

## **AGENDA ITEMS ...**

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

Colin welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief overview of the practicalities of the session.

He highlighted that the purpose of today's meeting was to:

- refine the theme / call to action;
- explore possible concepts for the graphics;
- outline the promotional / resource materials that will be available;
- begin to think about the social media strategy;
- share any initial ideas for activities / events / happenings.

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

Given the number of 'new faces', Finian 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 they represent and what it does;
- briefly outline their interest in men's work.

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

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021, were agreed as an accurate reflection of that gathering. There were no additional matters arising from these minutes.

### **4. Theme and Call to Action**

At the first all-island Men's Health Week 2022 Planning Group meeting in December 2021, twelve possible themes for the week were suggested by those present. Four additional ones were later added to the list by people who were not able to attend that gathering.

An initial vote was held to create a short-list of options, and everyone was invited to submit their top three choices. Seventy responses were received, and this considerably narrowed down the field of possibilities - with four titles standing out clearly from the rest:

- Myth Buster - 33 Votes
- MISSION: isPOSSIBLE - 33 Votes
- Men's Health Matters - 28 Votes
- The Invisible Man - 26 Votes

A second round of voting was then opened, and Planning Group members were asked to nominate their top preference among the remaining four options. In total, eighty-one responses were received, and a clear winner arose. This was 'MISSION: isPOSSIBLE'.

In order of popularity, the votes cast were:

1. MISSION: isPOSSIBLE - 40 Votes
2. Myth Buster - 19 Votes
3. Men's Health Matters - 13 Votes
4. The Invisible Man - 9 Votes

However, many people also responded to say that they would be happy with any of these options - so, it was suggested that we might keep some of these on hold for 2023 (or later).

Group members were randomly assigned to one of six 'Zoom Breakout Rooms', and asked to explore two key questions:

- a) What should the call to action be?
- b) What key messages do we want to convey this year?

The feedback included ...

### **CALL TO ACTION**

- Light the fuse.
- Make it count.
- Reignite your passion [or reignite your enthusiasm, or interests etc.].
- What do you want to achieve?
- What's your mission [or what's your personal mission]?
- What's your 'possible'?
- Every mission counts.
- Empower yourself.
- The action starts with you.
- You're in control.
- Make it possible.
- Find the spark.
- Jumpstart your imagination.
- It's a slow burn.
- You have the power.
- It's your time to shine.
- Take action. Take control.
- It can be done [or you can do it].
- Be your own hero [or be your own action hero].
- Change starts with you.
- Re-group, re-ignite and re-engage (*i.e. come out of COVID by re-assembling your networks, rediscovering your passion and linking to support services*).

Colin will circulate the suggestions noted for a vote to narrow down the possibilities.

## KEY MESSAGES

- Keep everything strengths-based and positively focused.
- Set yourself a realistic challenge.
- See the light at the end of the tunnel as we (hopefully) move out of COVID.
- Re-engage with the world and the support services available. Make the journey back to 'normality'.
- Come forward and actively seek help for your health issues.
- Make [e.g. cancer, heart troubles, mental health difficulties etc.] less frightening by enlightening.
- Know that you are not alone.
- Focus on the possibilities rather than the problems. The term '*Is Possible*' is about re-framing difficulties and issues.
- Offer encouragement to the men and boys around you.
- Have the confidence to reach out.
- Realise you have the power to take control over many areas of your life and health.
- Play on the wording of the film franchise i.e. '*Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is ...*' This implies both choice and an acceptance of that choice.
- Highlight that many men have chances / opportunities to do what seems to be impossible.
- Stress that almost nothing is impossible. Where there's a will, there's a way.

There was consensus that whatever the call to action is, it should be simple, straightforward and inclusive. The call to action must speak to service providers and policy makers, as well as to men themselves. It was also suggested that there is a danger in having high profile people on-board as they can actually distract from the key call and messages - as this week is about everyone, not just 'special people'.

Full group discussion took place focusing on how the theme could be represented graphically. Ideas included ...

- A running track with different milestones clearly marked.
- A person hanging off a rope ladder.
- An 'identikit pack' to make your own action hero.
- A holdall bag for a man on a mission (what would be in it?).
- A park scene with men riding a bike, jogging, walking the dog, pushing a pram, playing with children, chatting on a bench etc.
- A man walking out of the door - from the dark into the light.
- Someone lighting a fuse.
- A silhouette of a 'Rocky' type character who has ran up a steep set of steps and is punching the air in triumph.
- A map / diagram with zones or targets on it.
- A man looking at a destination screen (in an airport or train station) with the Five Ways to Wellbeing on it.
- Looking over a man's shoulder towards a phone or computer screen which has either '*Your mission, if you choose to accept it, is ...*' or the Five Ways to Wellbeing on it.

It was, however, also pointed out that whatever visual is chosen has to:

- be simple, eye-catching, engaging and self-explanatory;
- represent as many different types of man as possible; and
- not be too aggressive.

The purpose of the image is to grab the viewer's attention and whet their appetite to find out more. Very complex, sophisticated and cluttered images don't work well in small spaces.

## 5. Promotional / Resource Materials

As in previous years, a range of resources will be created to support Men's Health Week (MHW) 2022. Colin outlined that these will include ...

- **WEB PAGE:** A bespoke web page for MHW 2022 will be created at <https://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2022.html> This will act as the central focal point for information on the week. Visit <https://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2021.html> to see what last year's looked like.
- **TOOLBOX FOR ACTION:** As in previous years, this document will offer a Q&A style overview of the week - to ensure that everyone has a common understanding. You can view the 2021 'Toolbox' at: <https://www.mhfi.org/mhw2021toolbox.pdf>
- **POSTERS | POSTCARDS:** When the poster image is finalised, posters and postcards will be created to highlight the week. These will be available in hard copy, as well as electronic format for free online downloading.
- **GRAPHICS:** A broad range of graphics will be created to support the week. These will include a MHW logo, banner, badge, Facebook Cover Photo / Profile Picture, Twitter Header Image, a bespoke graphic for each themed day of MHW to accompany the Posts and Tweets that individual organisations develop ... They will be made available at: <https://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-image-pack.html>
- **LATEST NEWS:** Everyone can keep up-to-date with developments during MHW at: [www.facebook.com/MensHealthWeek](http://www.facebook.com/MensHealthWeek) | [www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL](http://www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL)
- **MAN MANUAL:** One of the most requested materials during previous Men's Health Weeks has been the 'Challenges and Choices' Man Manual (see: <https://www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2021.html#Challenges>). Colin will explore the possibilities for updating and re-printing this for 2022. It will also be made available as a PDF for free online downloading.

## 6. Social Media Themes / Messages for MHW 2022

In recent years, the Planning Group agreed to draw attention to a specific theme on each day during MHW, as well as on the days leading up to it. Traditionally, these focused upon discrete men's health issues (e.g. mental health, diet, alcohol, smoking, cancer, heart health, physical activity etc. - see: [www.mhfi.org/Tweets2020.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/Tweets2020.pdf)) on each of the days.

The themes agreed last year were, however, much broader and more generic. While there were some advantages to this approach, the feedback afterwards warned that ...

- They were too vague and too hard to create content for.
- It was much more difficult to generate as much online interest as normal - or sometimes any at all.
- Creating a common pool of social media Posts / Tweets for use by everyone proved to be almost impossible. This, therefore, meant we lost our casual supporters who want a quick and easy way to support the week.
- After the first day of the week, little or no online coverage was evident.

Given this feedback, it is proposed that we return to the much more successful format used in previous years.

## **7. Ideas for Events / Activities / Happenings**

Finian invited everyone to share any initial ideas that group members have for their own activities / events / happenings during Men's Health Week 2022.

## **8. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Planning Group will be held via Zoom on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022. It will begin at 2.00pm.