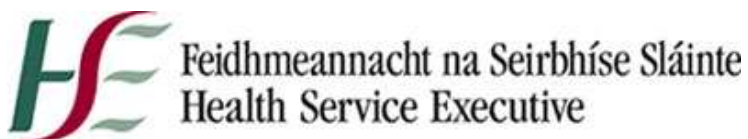


Progress Report on Men's Health Activities for 2009



This report details the activities of Dr Noel Richardson & Dr Paula Carroll who, together, fulfill a 4.5 day post within Health Promotion in the Health Services Executive (HSE). There is a lot more activity happening in the area of men's health that is not included here that is reported elsewhere.

1.0 Areas of Work

The areas of work identified by the Secretariat will be outlined in sections 1.1 – 1.11 below and each area will be linked to the National Men's Health Policy by reference to specific Recommendations and Actions (see Appendix 1).

1.1 Implementation Planning Group (R5.1.1; R5.1.2; A5.1.2)

The Implementation Planning Group was formally established on the 10th of June 2009 and met three times in 2009. At the inaugural meeting, it was agreed that

- a) the Group should have an implementation planning/advisory role and
- b) the group would be made up of all those invited to the meeting and could engage with other Sectors at different stages rather than inviting more members. It was suggested that the relevant Government Departments be met bi-laterally rather than being members of the Group.

An audit of the action plan was undertaken and the Department of Health and Children (DoHC) co-ordinated responses from other Government Departments. The Secretariat, in conjunction with the DoHC, also began documenting the process of implementing the policy that will go forward to inform the mid-term evaluation proposed for July 2011.

Plan for 2010

The Group is planning to meet in February 2010. The prioritization of actions and a timeframe for their implementation is to be considered by the Group at that meeting.

1.2 Centre for Men's Health, IT Carlow (A5.1.1.2; R5.2.1; A5.2.1.1; A5.2.2)

The Centre for Men's Health was formally established at IT Carlow in January, 2009. Currently, the Centre is staffed with a Director, one Research Assistant and two MA students. The Research Assistant was co-funded by IT Carlow and the HSE on a one-year contract.

Activities in 2009;

- An Post project (see section 1.6)
- Primary Care Obesity Project (see section 1.7)
- Evaluation Report Men's Health Week (Available at: www.mhfi.org/mhwevaluation2009.pdf)

- Work ongoing on Evaluation Report for Larkin Centre men's health project, Dublin
- Satellite Centre for successful tender for first EU Report on Men's Health – commencing Jan 2010
- Ongoing development of men's health training resource pack

Plans for 2010

- Complete Primary Care Obesity Project
- Continue An Post Project
- Seek funding for extension of RA post
- Support the completion of first EU Report on Men's Health
- Complete Men's Health Training Resource Pack
- Submit application for research funding to Institute of Public Health in Ireland to investigate relationship between unemployment and men's health
- Submit application for research funding to Irish Cancer Society to conduct secondary analysis of data on cancer incidence and cancer mortality among Irish men
- Submit application for research funding to Teagasc to conduct study on rural men's health

1.3 Research Agenda and Forum on Men's Health (A5.1.1.2; A5.2.1.1; R5.2.2)

Plans are underway to formally establish a men's health research forum in Ireland. In preparation for the Health Promotion Summer School 2010 that will be devoted to Men's Health, an audit of existing research activity on men's health will be conducted. All those identified will be invited to attend the Summer School with a view to formally meeting at the event. To date, the following research activity has been identified; a) Centre for Men's Health at IT Carlow (see section 1.2); Men's Health Research Team within the Centre for Health Behaviour Research at Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) (2 staff and 1 MA student); Teagasc (1 MA and 1 PhD student); Men's Health Forum in Ireland; Men's Development Network.

International links have also been established to support the research agenda on men's health in Ireland. These links include; a) Dr Noel Richardson is a board member of European Men's Health Forum and is involved in 2 joint research bids via EMHF, one of which was recently successful. In addition, it is proposed that the EMHF board meeting will be hosted at the Summer School 2010; b) Dr Paula Carroll is part of an international group that convened to advance the area of the social determinants of men's health and is involved in a joint research bid to the Health Research Board.

To date (2008 & 2009) funding for men's health research has been secured via Strand I, HSE, IT Carlow, WIT, Community Services, Community Foundation Ireland. Furthermore a key focus of the Research Assistant with the Centre for Men's Health is to secure funding.

Research dissemination outcomes;

Publications (2009)

- Richardson N & Carroll P. Getting Men's Health onto a Policy Agenda – Charting the Development of a National Men's Health Policy in Ireland. *Journal of Men's Health*, 6(2): 105-13. 2009.
- Richardson N. & Carroll P. Improving Male Health. A review of policy and progress in 12 countries. *Men's Health in Ireland*. In: *Men's Health Around the World: a review of policy and progress in 11 countries*. Edts Wilkins D. & Savoye E. Brussels: European Men's Health Forum. pp. 33-38. 2009. Available at http://www.emhf.org/resource_images/11countries.pdf
- Carroll P. Engaging Vulnerable Men in Ireland. *Journal of Men's Health*, 6(3): 273 no.182. 2009.
- Richardson N (2009). Ireland – the first National Men's Health Policy; *Journal of Men's Health*, 6(3): 267 no.157
- Smith J., White A., Richardson N., & Robertson S. (2009). The men's health policy contexts in Australia, the UK & Ireland: Advancement or abandonment? *Critical Public Health*. Vol 9, Nos. 3-4; November-December; 427-440.

Presentations (2009)

- Richardson N. National Men's Health Policy: Working with men in Ireland to achieve optimum health & wellbeing. Presentation at launch of National Men's Health Policy, Dublin, 28th January 2009
- Richardson N. 'Men count too': Harnessing strength through challenging times. Presentation at Clare Mental Health Week, 6th October 2009
- Richardson N. Men's Health in Ireland: The first National Strategy Presentation at 6th Biennial World Congress on Men's Health & Gender, Vienna, Oct 10th 2009
- Richardson N. An Post Men's Health Project. Presentation at European Men's Health Forum Network Meeting, Vienna, 9th Oct 2009
- Richardson N Engender Project. Presentation at European Men's Health Forum Network Meeting, Vienna, 10th Oct 2009
- Richardson N. Looking beyond the prostate: Reflecting on the paradoxes, dilemmas and challenges for men's health in the 21st Century. Presentation at Inequalities Forum, UL, 4th Dec 2009
- Carroll P. Engaging Vulnerable Men in Ireland. Presentation at the 6th World Congress on Men's Health, Vienna, October 2009.
- Carroll P. The Approach to Policy Development. European Men's Health Forum, Network Meeting, Vienna, Austria. 9th – 11th October, 2009.

Plans for 2010

Disseminate research findings via conferences, research reports and peer-reviewed journals

1.4 Gender Mainstreaming Group (R5.1.1.4)

A gender-mainstreaming group has been established within the HSE and men's health is represented on this group.

Plan for 2010

To progress and develop a gender mainstreaming framework for the HSE

1.5 Men's Health Training & Education (A5.2.1; R7.1; A7.1; R7.2; A7.2)

A 2-day men's health training programme was developed and piloted by the HSE, IT Carlow and the Men's Development Network to community workers, trainee GPs, men's health workers and health promotion officers. This training is made up of 4 modules; 1) Men's Health - An Introduction; 2) Principles of Best Practice when Working with Men; 3) Men's Health – The Consultation; 4) Engaging Men with Services. An elective on "Gender and Health" has been delivered on the Health Promotion and Exercise and Health Degree programmes at WIT since 2008. In addition, 2 workshops were delivered at the ICGP Summer School in 2009 and are as follows;

- Carroll P. & Brennan L. Managing the Reluctant Male Attender. Irish Congress of General Practitioners Summer School, Kilkenny, 23rd June 2009.
- Richardson N. What does a *Male-Friendly* Practice look like? Presentation at Irish Congress of General Practitioners Summer School Kilkenny, 23rd June 2009

Plan for 2010

The resource pack for the men's health training programme is to be completed and made available online. The training will be delivered to staff from the Irish Heart Foundation, the Irish Cancer Society and as part of the Health Promotion Summer School. HETAC accreditation for the training programme will also be sought and other 3rd level institutions will be contacted with a view to integrating this programme on their own undergraduate and degree programmes. It is also planned to integrate this accredited programme on the ICGP prospectus for GP training and professional development.

1.6 Men's Health in the Workplace (Chapter 9.3)

a) An Post Initiative (R6.2; A8.1; R9.3.1)

Since January 2009, Dr Noel Richardson has worked in partnership with An Post to develop a men's health booklet (*Male Minder*: <http://www.mhfi.org/anpost.pdf>). This booklet was distributed among all staff during NMHW 2009 and prior to its distribution, it was flagged via a variety of media that included posters in local offices and the An Post newsletter. This impact of this booklet is currently being evaluated by an MA student at IT Carlow under the supervision of Dr Noel Richardson.

b) National Health Promotion Workplace Group (R9.3.1)

Dr Paula Carroll was invited to attend a meeting of the National Health Promotion Workplace Group to give an overview of the links with their work and the National Men's Health Policy. She was subsequently invited to become part of this group.

Plans for 2010

It is not known whether this group will continue in 2010.

1.7 Men's Health in Primary Care Setting (8.1)

Research is currently being conducted at IT Carlow in the area of Primary Care. Specifically, the research is focusing on the development of best practice guidelines for obese men in the primary care setting.

Plans for 2010

To complete this research

1.8 International Men's Health Week (R6.2; R8.1; A8.1)

The MHFI took the lead on celebrating IMHW 2009 the theme of which was "Men and Access to Services". Throughout the course of the week the MHFI campaign included the following activities to promote this theme:

- Local and national media campaign including print, radio and television media.
- "Snail Male" Poster Campaign targeting men attending general practitioner (GP) surgeries and places where men convene (Boylesport bookmakers and golf clubs). For evaluation see <http://www.mhfi.org/mhw2009.htm>
- Distribution of evidence based "Top Tips" to GP's to support them to engage men in their services. Available at <http://www.mhfi.org/toptips2009.pdf>

- Online promotion of all local and national activities conducted as part of NMHW (see www.mhfi.org).

Plans for 2010

Plans are underway for 2010 the theme of which is Physical Activity for Men and Boys. The MHFI have appointed a Steering Group that have met to discuss ideas for 2010. In 2010 this group will be extended to include the IHF, the ICS, the GAA and possibly the Irish Sports Council, the IRFU, the FAI and other interested parties from N Ireland.

1.9 Community Development for Vulnerable Men (Chapter 10)

a) Carlow Men's Health Project (R10.1; A10.1)

In response to health issues impacting on men's lives in Carlow town and county, a number of local services have adopted an integrated approach to support vulnerable men to improve their health. The Carlow Men's Health Project (CMHP), which began in June 2007, is presently represented by Carlow County Council - RAPID, Health Promotion Department, HSE South Area, Carlow County Development Partnership, St. Catherine's Community Services Centre, Men's Development Network, County Carlow Sports Partnership and Open Door Community Development Project. This pilot project, which is a collaborative effort, is also supported by staff from Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) and the Men's Health Research Centre, IT Carlow.

From June – November 2009 the CMHP engaged with vulnerable men in Carlow by offering free community based health checks at places where men gather (e.g. cattle marts, social welfare office). A total of 162 men availed of this free health service and consultation. In addition to the health checks, a health needs assessment was also conducted among men with a view to developing a strategy to support men locally. It is intended that this strategy, based on ideas raised by the men themselves, will come on stream early in 2010.

Plans for 2010

Finalise the strategy arising from the work conducted to date. Continue to evaluate the work of the CMHP.

b) Audit of Community Development Projects (A10.1)

The Men's Development Network, with the support of the Secretariat, have conducted an analysis of the Community Development Projects (CDPs) nationally. In total 180 CDPs were contacted with a view to obtaining the following information:

- a) The level and nature of the work being done with men via this network
- b) The barriers to doing more with men at community level.
- c) The successes experienced by CSPs with men.
- d) The training needs of CDPs to work with men.

The analysis of the data is ongoing.

Plans for 2010

The analysis of the audit will be completed and recommendations generated. These recommendations will then be reviewed in order to generate an appropriate strategy of work.

1.10 Health Promotion Summer School on Men's Health (R7.2)

In 2010, the Health Promotion Summer School will be devoted to exploring "Multidisciplinary Approaches to Men's Health". Dr Noel Richardson and Dr Paula Carroll are members of the Steering Committee organizing this summer school. In addition, a one day training will be delivered the day before the summer school and a network meeting of those working and researching in the area of men's health will also be hosted.

Plans for 2010

Host the Summer School and network meeting (June 10th & 11th).

1.11 Other Activities

Throughout the year, requests were made of the Secretariat to give one off workshops / presentations to specific groups. In 2009 these included;

- Carroll P. Men's Health Workshop. Community Health Ireland. August 2009.
- Carroll P. and Murray F. National Men's Health Policy 2008 – 2013. Regional Health Forum – Dublin North East, Committee Meeting, Meath, Ireland. April 2009.
- Richardson N. Putting the spotlight on men's health. Presentation at Staff Health Day, St Canice's Hospital Kilkenny, 26th June 2009
- Richardson N. *Men's Health*. Presentation at Farm Safety Partnership Advisory Committee Meeting, Dublin, 2nd December 2009
- (See also Section 1.3)

2.0 Membership of the National Implementation Planning Group

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Mr Robbie Breen | Department of Health & Children (Chair) |
| Ms Biddy O'Neill | Health Service Executive |
| Mr Owen Metcalfe | Institute of Public Health |
| Ms Ann Scanlon | Irish Heart Foundation |
| Ms Rosemary Scott | Irish Cancer Society |
| Mr Finian Murray | Men's Health Forum in Ireland |
| Ms Eileen Ryan | Department of Health & Children |
| Mr Lorcan Brennan | Men's Development Network |
| Dr Noel Richardson | Institute of Technology, Carlow (Secretariat) |
| Dr Paula Carroll | Institute of Technology, Waterford (Secretariat) |

Appendix 1

| RECOMMENDATIONS (R) and ACTIONS (A) | | LEAD AGENCY |
|--|---|--|
| STRENGTHENING PUBLIC POLICY ON MEN'S HEALTH | | |
| R5.1.1 | Oversee the implementation of the policy at an interdepartmental level and monitor and evaluate policy outcomes on an ongoing basis. | Dept. of Health and Children HSE |
| A5.1.1 | <p>2. Develop a joint research agenda on men's health.</p> <p>4. Develop a framework for gender-mainstreaming men's health across all Government departments that is based on current international models of best practice[34, 35] and that is consistent with the development of a National Equality Strategy Framework[50].</p> | <p>Dept. of Health and Children HSE</p> <p>Dept. of Health and Children HSE Equality Authority Other relevant Government departments</p> |
| R5.1.2 | Establish appropriate structures and secure resources to support the implementation of the policy. | Dept. of Health and Children HSE Other relevant Government departments |
| A5.1.2 | <p>5. Appoint a National Implementation Group to oversee the implementation of the policy, giving due consideration to the following (<i>see Figure 5.1</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of appropriate structures at both national and regional level to support the implementation of the Men's Health Action Plan. • Establishing strong networks and partnerships that integrate men's health within existing | HSE |

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| | <p>organisations in the statutory, community and voluntary sectors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of clear, time-framed performance indicators and health outcomes for men's health. | |
| R5.2.1 | Establish a Centre for Research and Development in Men's Health. | Dept. of Health and Children |
| A5.2.1 | <p>1. Support the establishment for a Centre for Research and Development in Men's Health, in partnership with an academic Institution, with consideration to be given to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a National Men's Health Research Framework and Network within the context of the existing National Population Health Research Framework. • Actively compete for other research funding, including that outlined through the National Population Health Research Framework. • Establish baseline measures across different aspects of men's health that can be monitored to evaluate changes in men's health status over time. • Broaden the research base and increase the level of post-graduate research on men's health. • Promote more multidisciplinary approaches to research on men's health. • Develop appropriate filtering mechanisms to disseminate research findings. • Liaise with other academic institutions to promote an increased focus on men's health in relevant undergraduate and post-graduate courses. • Develop and maintain links with international research on men's health. | Dept. of Health and Children |
| R5.2.2 | Ensure that research continues to underpin the implementation and evaluation of the policy. | Dept. of Health and Children HSE |
| A5.2.2 | <p>2. Review on an ongoing basis the implications of research findings (both national and international) for both policy and practice.</p> <p>3. The proposed Centre for Research and Development in Men's Health will support practitioners with the ongoing evaluation of men's health initiatives on the ground.</p> | HSE Dept. of Health and Children HSE |

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| | | Proposed Centre for R&D in Men's Health |
| PROMOTING MEN'S HEALTH – MARKETING, INFORMATION AND PROGRAMMES | | |
| R6.2 | Devise gender-competent health information and disseminate it through media that are appropriate for men. | HSE Other relevant Government departments |
| PROMOTING GENDER-COMPETENCY IN THE DELIVERY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES | | |
| R7.1 | Develop specialised academic programmes on men's health and integrate modules on gender and men's health into the training syllabi of all health and allied health courses. | Institutes of Technology Ireland Irish Universities Association Third-level institutions Relevant professional bodies |
| A7.1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use existing academic structures to expand and develop specialised academic programmes and research in men's health (and 'men's studies' in the wider context of health), from Certificate to Masters/PhD level. 2. Provide a clear focus on gender and men's health in all undergraduate, post-graduate and professional development programmes for health and allied health professionals. | Institutes of Technology Ireland Irish Universities Association Third-level institutions Relevant professional bodies Institutes of Technology Ireland Irish Universities Association |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | Third-level institutions Relevant professional bodies |
| R7.2 | Develop training protocols and training courses on men's health that are tailored to the needs of those working in the health and allied health professions, and that offer a range of innovative methodologies. | HSE |
| A7.2 | <p>3. Develop training protocols and short training courses in the area of men's health, targeting existing service providers in the health, allied health and community sectors.</p> <p>4. Develop men's health training protocols and modules for delivery through existing community education and community development programmes.</p> <p>5. Ensure that training opportunities are provided for men to become facilitators of men's groups, using experiential methodologies.</p> <p>6. Develop models of peer training to enable men to support other men to manage their health.</p> | <p>HSE</p> <p>HSE Community Development Organisations</p> <p>HSE Community Development Organisations</p> <p>HSE Community Development Organisations</p> |
| BUILDING GENDER-COMPETENT HEALTH SERVICES WITH A FOCUS ON PREVENTATIVE HEALTH | | |
| R8.1 | Develop specific initiatives that enable men to access health services promptly, particularly for conditions that pose a serious threat to their health. Specific provisions should be made for marginalised subgroups of men (e.g. Traveller men, ethnic minority men, disabled men, isolated rural men). | HSE Irish College of General Practitioners |

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|---|---|--|
| A8.1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop specific health education initiatives that enable men to make more informed decisions about seeking help in a timely fashion for health conditions that pose a serious threat to their health. 2. Improve men's access to primary care services by creating more 'male-friendly' environments within those services. 3. Consider mechanisms for tackling the cost of primary care services for non-GMS holders. 4. Clearly advertise the eligibility criteria for GMS entitlement. 5. Support complementary models of healthcare to men that offer easy access, opportunistic health checks and a more holistic model of healthcare. 6. Pilot methods of managing primary care databases to identify indicators of health disadvantage (e.g. men who are living alone, long-term non-attenders). 7. Develop systems at primary care level to monitor and track the delivery to and uptake of services by men who are not in long-term relationships. 8. Ensure that primary care services are accessible to people with disabilities, in accordance with the Disability Act 2005. | <p>HSE</p> <p>HSE</p> <p>HSE</p> <p>HSE</p> <p>HSE</p> <p>HSE</p> <p>HSE</p> <p>HSE</p> |
| DEVELOPING SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS FOR HEALTH: THE WORKPLACE | | |
| R9.3.1 | Adopt a more targeted and gender-specific approach to the development of health promotion initiatives in the workplace. | <p>Dept. of Enterprise, Trade and Employment Health and Safety Authority HSE</p> |

| STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY ACTION TO SUPPORT MEN'S HEALTH | | |
|---|---|--|
| R10.1 | Develop mechanisms and structures to support community work for men who experience disadvantage. | Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs HSE |
| A10.1 | <p>1. Establish a national agency to represent all those working in the area of men's health within communities, paying particular attention to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate the work being done with men on the ground (e.g. networking and support for and dissemination of evaluation). • Support those working with men in communities (e.g. financial and professional). • Expand the area of community development for men's health. • Ensure a partnership approach to community development work for men between community, voluntary and statutory sectors (e.g. developing and delivering training). • Represent men within communities in the national arena to inform public policy. | HSE |