

# E-Male Matters

## September 2014

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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## News

### World Suicide Prevention Day 2014

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September is [World Suicide Prevention Day 2014](#). This day brings together individuals and organisations with an interest in suicide prevention, and mobilises efforts to save lives. It has been marked every year since 2003. This year, the theme is '*Suicide Prevention: One World Connected*'. Feeling connected is crucial to individuals who may be vulnerable to suicide. Studies have shown that social isolation can increase the risk of suicide and, conversely, that having strong human bonds can protect against it. Reaching out to those who have become disconnected from others, and offering them support and friendship, may be a life-saving act. However, connectedness can also be understood in terms of holistic medical care and coordinating the efforts of everyone who has contact with vulnerable people. For more information, see: [www.iasp.info/wspd](http://www.iasp.info/wspd)

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### Irish Heart Month

During September 2014, Ireland's Heart Month will focus on alcohol and the link to heart disease and stroke. The aim is to encourage people to say 'when' sooner. There are many conflicting messages about whether alcohol is good or bad for the heart. There are also many unanswered questions such as: 'How much is too much?' 'What is the recommended maximum weekly level that should be consumed?' 'What is a standard drink?' ... Materials, including posters and a free colour magazine exploring issues related to alcohol and heart health, are available from the [Irish Heart Foundation](#). For more details, visit: [www.irishheart.ie/saywhensooner](http://www.irishheart.ie/saywhensooner)

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## Online Counselling for Men - Turn2Me Today

[Turn2Me](#) is an online mental health organisation providing a range of services to adults affected by mental health / well-being difficulties of various sorts. These services include support forums, support groups, information, a mood-tracking tool called 'Thought Catcher', and counselling (provided by fully qualified staff). Turn2Me delivers free online counselling through an eight week 'Engage Programme'. This uses online chat software. To participate, visit [www.turn2me.org/engage](http://www.turn2me.org/engage) and apply. Whilst 'Engage' is open to any adult in Ireland, there is a particular focus upon providing this service to men. Some men may be less inclined to access emotional support. Doing so online may feel more comfortable, and is also easier to access from home. Turn2Me is supported by the [National Office for Suicide Prevention](#).

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## Men's Sheds in Northern Ireland Tackle Social Isolation

[Niamh Wellbeing](#), a leading mental health and well-being charity, recognises the need to address the problem of social isolation and loneliness among older men in communities across Northern Ireland. The state of men's mental health is a public health challenge that the charity aims to tackle through its Men's Shed project. It is well recognised that men use fewer community-based health services than women, and are less likely to participate in preventive health activities. The reluctance of men (especially older men) to engage with services and activities in the community, the high rates of social isolation and loneliness in the older age group, and a greater tendency to engage in more risky health behaviours, combine to make men vulnerable to physical and mental ill-health. Men's Sheds originated from the shed in a backyard scenario, and offers a new alternative to traditional mental health therapy built on social interaction, increased social resources and informal learning, which leads to improved mental well-being. For further information, contact Bronagh Sharpe on Tel: 02890 328474 or Email: [b.sharpe@niamhwellbeing.org](mailto:b.sharpe@niamhwellbeing.org)

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## Men on the Move in Meath

[Meath Local Sports Partnership](#), in association with the [HSE](#), launched an exciting new project called 'Men on the Move in Meath' in August 2014. Men on the Move is aimed at men aged 30+ to get them active, have fun and improve their fitness levels. The programme offers these men a variety of activities, and involves weekly activity sessions which are tutor-led. The participants don't need to be fit to take part - as the training sessions are structured so that participants can progress at a pace which suits themselves. Men on the Move is being delivered in three areas in Meath - Laytown / Bettystown, Dunshaughlin and Kiltale. To find out more, contact Ruairi Murphy from Meath Local Sports Partnership, on Tel: 046 9067337 or Email: [rmurphy@meathcoco.ie](mailto:rmurphy@meathcoco.ie)

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*The Men's Health Forum in Ireland is proud to support the 'See Change' partnership*

### **Technology for Well-Being Conference**

The second annual international Technology for Well-Being Conference will take place on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in Croke Park, Dublin. The theme for this year is 'Bridging the Digital Disconnect'. This event is open to service providers, policy makers, health managers, the technology sector, researchers, media, students and interested members of the public. Presentations will explore: innovation in technology and mental health; social media and mental health; suicide prevention and the internet; mental health promotion / public messaging online; national policy in technology and mental health; good practice in the safe delivery of online mental health services; crisis response protocols; technology, cyber-safety and young people; youth participation and engagement with online interventions. For more information, visit: <http://ie.reachout.com/about/technology-for-well-being-conference>

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### **Launch of Report on Service Provision for Men Aged 50+ in Belfast**

You are invited to the launch of a report which examines service provision for men aged 50+ in the greater-Belfast area. This research was undertaken by a team from [Queen's University Belfast](#) on behalf of the Older Men's Steering Group within Age Partnership Belfast. The Partnership will also be launched at this event, which will take place on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2014, from 11.00am - 12.30pm, in the Banqueting Hall of Belfast City Hall. If you would like more information or to attend, contact Pamela in Volunteer Now at Tel: 02890 232020 or Email: [pamela.higgins@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:pamela.higgins@volunteernow.co.uk)

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### **Transitions and Youth Mental Health**

To coincide with World Mental Health Day (10<sup>th</sup> October 2014), the 4th National Research Conference on Youth Mental Health will take place in Cork. This dynamic and multi-disciplinary one day event (co-hosted by the Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Special Interest Group in Youth Mental Health, the Inspire Ireland Foundation, and the National Suicide Research Foundation) will: bring together researchers, clinicians, policy-makers and others who care for and work with adolescents and young adults; showcase the latest research and innovation in the area of youth mental health; address the multiple transitions (mental health, developmental, social, psychological and service transitions) faced by young people; draw together a multi-disciplinary audience across specialties and services; highlight the role young people can and do play in promoting good policy and practice in mental health. Participation from students, clinicians, community organisations and researchers is greatly encouraged. Further details are available from Fenella Murphy, Email: [fenella@inspireireland.ie](mailto:fenella@inspireireland.ie)

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### **Northern Ireland Fertility Information Day 2014**

You are invited to a Northern Ireland Fertility Information Day which will be held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014, from 9.30am - 4.30pm, in Riddel Hall, Stranmillis Road, Belfast. Zita West (Midwife and fertility expert) will speak about 'Body, Mind and Lifestyle Management', while other themes to be explored on the day will include: NHS treatment and funding; clinical treatment options; fertility counselling; camera technology; male fertility; donor treatment options; and local adoption. The cost is £10 for patients / individuals and £20 for professionals (includes tea / coffee and lunch). To book a place visit [www.infertilitynetworkuk.com](http://www.infertilitynetworkuk.com) For further information, contact Sharon Davidson on Tel: 02890 825677 or Email: [sharondavidson@infertilitynetworkuk.com](mailto:sharondavidson@infertilitynetworkuk.com)

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## 7 Key Questions for a Better Life

Can you afford to miss the '7 Key Questions for a Better Life' Men's Health Training Day? ... Throughout Autumn 2014, the [Men's Development Network](#) (MDN) will travel across Ireland delivering their highly successful training package to anyone interested in engaging with men. This day is facilitated in an open, friendly and experiential way, and draws upon discussion, group work and presentations to explore relevant topics. Issues are explored via the '7 Key Questions' which have been developed by MDN. These questions can be used in a number of settings to positively address issues which impact upon men's lives and to map next steps to a better life. The training provides a valuable insight into why supporting men is crucial. It also demonstrates successful ways to support men, and highlights best practice for engaging men with health and life issues in a developmental way. For further information, contact Lorcan Brennan (Email: [lorcan@mens-network.net](mailto:lorcan@mens-network.net) | Mobile: 086 3619884) or Martin Doheny (Email: [martin@mens-network.net](mailto:martin@mens-network.net) | Mobile 087 318 0156).

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## Let's Talk About ... Safer Sex

'Let's Talk About ... Safer Sex' is a four day Training for Trainers Programme. The primary aim is to train youth and community workers to deliver HIV, hepatitis, and sexual health education programmes to the groups in their care. The next programme will take place on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September, Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October and Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014. Sessions will last from 10.00am to 4.30pm each day, and will take place in [Dublin AIDS Alliance](#), 53 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1. On completion of the training, each participant will receive a copy of the 'Let's Talk About ... Safer Sex' training resource. Further information is available at: [www.dublinaidalliance.ie/index.php?page=training](http://www.dublinaidalliance.ie/index.php?page=training) or by emailing: [niamh.fingleton@dublinaidalliance.ie](mailto:niamh.fingleton@dublinaidalliance.ie)

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## Health Impact Assessment Training

The next [Institute of Public Health in Ireland](#) Health Impact Assessment (HIA) training course will take place from 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014, in the Hilton Hotel, Kilmainham, Dublin. Health is determined by a range of social, economic and environmental factors. HIA is a practical, systematic approach which assesses the health impacts of policies, programmes and projects developed by a range of organisations. It supports people in the health sector, as well as those who do not have health as their primary objective. HIA ensures that impacts are identified, and allows decision-makers to make choices about alternatives and improvements that actively promote health and well-being. This three day course gives participants the knowledge and skills to plan for and conduct a HIA across a range of settings. It will be of use to those working in local government, healthcare, education, public health, health promotion, planning, socio-economic development, neighbourhood renewal, environmental health and the community and voluntary sectors. An application form and further information is available at: [www.publichealth.ie/ireland/hiatraining/comprehensivehiatrainingcourse](http://www.publichealth.ie/ireland/hiatraining/comprehensivehiatrainingcourse) Applications will close on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

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## Gaining Awareness of LGB and T Issues

[The Rainbow Project](#) is Northern Ireland's largest LGB and T sector organisation, and has been commissioned to deliver a number of training events funded through the [Public Health Agency](#) and [Protect Life](#). Places on these courses are free to participants. There are two types of training on offer: (1) Sexual Orientation Awareness Raising [one day] and (2) Introduction to Gay Affirmative Therapy [two days]. The topics covered in the training will

include: understanding same-sex attraction and use of appropriate terminology; understanding gender identity and expression and use of appropriate terminology; key health inequalities experienced by people who are same-sex attracted; forms of homophobia, heterosexism and internalised homophobia; barriers to accessing mainstream statutory service provision; legislative and social policy context; common issues when counselling LGB and T clients; tips for improvement of practice. For more details, visit: [www.rainbow-project.org/training](http://www.rainbow-project.org/training)

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## Research

### **Review of Ireland's National Men's Health Policy**

An independent review of the impact of Ireland's [National Men's Health Policy 2008-2013](#) has been commissioned by the Department of Health / Health Services Executive. This review will also inform the future direction of men's health policy in the context of the '[Healthy Ireland](#)' policy. An online survey forms an important part of the review, and anyone with knowledge of men's health issues in Ireland is encouraged to complete it. The survey can be accessed at: [www.surveymonkey.com/s/Ireland-Mens-Health-Policy-Review](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Ireland-Mens-Health-Policy-Review) The deadline for submissions is Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014, and the survey should take no more than 30 minutes to complete. Individual responses will not be published - only aggregated data will be made available. The Men's Health Policy Review is of huge importance to the men's health sector in Ireland, and it is essential that it gets the support it needs. Please help by responding to the survey. Details about the review can be found at [www.pbmenshealth.co.uk/review-of-irelands-national-mens-health-policy-2/#more-371](http://www.pbmenshealth.co.uk/review-of-irelands-national-mens-health-policy-2/#more-371) where there is also a facility for requesting more information and submitting additional views and comments.

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### **Study Reveals Scale of the Sexual Exploitation of Boys**

A new report reveals that the number of boys and young men being sexually exploited is much higher than previously thought. NatCen, working in partnership with Barnardos and University College London, published the findings from their research in August 2014. These also reveal a lack of public and professional awareness about this type of abuse. This research explored the ways in which boys and young men are being sexually exploited, whether boys' experiences and support needs are different to girls', and what services are currently available for boys and young men. More information is available online at: [www.natcen.ac.uk/our-research/research/understanding-the-sexual-exploitation-of-boys-and-young-men-in-the-uk/](http://www.natcen.ac.uk/our-research/research/understanding-the-sexual-exploitation-of-boys-and-young-men-in-the-uk/)

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### **Research into Best Practice when Working with Men**

The National Centre for Men's Health (within the [Institute of Technology Carlow](#)) is, currently, designing a best practice resource for service providers either working with men or looking to engage men in future initiatives. In order to tailor this material to service providers' unique experiences and needs, they have designed a short online survey, and are asking for your help to promote and complete it. The survey only takes about five minutes to fill out, and aims to identify topics and formats for a new resource. The survey can be found at:

[www.supersimplesurvey.com/Survey/8216/Mens\\_Health\\_Resource\\_Service\\_Provider\\_Survey\\_ /](http://www.supersimplesurvey.com/Survey/8216/Mens_Health_Resource_Service_Provider_Survey_/)

If you have any questions about this research, contact Maya Lefkowich, Research Assistant, at: [maya.lefkowich@itcarlow.ie](mailto:maya.lefkowich@itcarlow.ie)

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## Web Links

### Men's Issues on the Web ...

[Depression in men is a public health crisis](#)

[Nocturia less likely in men who exercise](#)

[Study explains why some brain tumors are more common in men](#)

[Violence in adolescent boys may be fuelled by neglect during childhood](#)

[Tomato-rich diet lowers prostate cancer risks](#)

[Male aggression: testosterone increases brain's threat response](#)

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## Next Edition

The next edition of E-Male Matters will be released in October 2014. Do you know of anything (research, events, resources, news etc.) affecting men and boys which should be included in it? There's a simple template for all articles. Let us know (within 150 words) all the crucial details e.g. title, date, time, venue, short description, contact details for further information (name, telephone and/or email address), and web link (if available) for a fuller explanation. To keep the file size of this newsletter small, we cannot, unfortunately, accept photographs or images. Please email your information to: [emalematters@mhfi.org](mailto:emalematters@mhfi.org) The submission deadline for the October edition is Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

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E-Male Matters is also available online at:  
[www.mhfi.org/newsletters/about-e-male-matters.html](http://www.mhfi.org/newsletters/about-e-male-matters.html)

The views expressed in E-Male Matters are not, necessarily, those of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

