

July – August 2019

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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News

Men's Health Week is not just for June

Men's Health Week (MHW) 2019 was one of the most successful ever in Ireland. During this week, everyone was asked to make the time and take the time to do something realistic to improve both their own health and the health of the men and boys that they have contact with. One of the most popular ways to do this was by using the 'Challenges and Choices' Man Manual. While there's no denying that the state of men's health on the island of Ireland is often poor, there are practical things which can be done to change this situation. Men, themselves, can play a key role in doing this by accepting one or more of the ten simple health challenges issued in the Man Manual. Although all 15,000 hard copies of this publication were given out within a few weeks of their release, electronic copies can still be downloaded from the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) website at: www.mhfi.org/challenges2019.pdf MHW 2019 might now be a distant memory for some, but there's still time (and a step-by-step guide) to improve the health of local men over the coming months.



Jumpers for Goalposts

Congratulations to Keith Kelly and all the lads in Ballybrack in Dublin for helping to create the newest health craze for men in Ireland - 'Jumpers for Goalposts'. It's great to think how such a small and simple idea can bring together so many men to enjoy each other's company, have a bit of craic, and improve their mental (and physical) health! Are you intrigued yet? ... If so, find out more by checking out some of their videos (www.youtube.com/watch?v=aZh jxuZ0-M) or visiting their new website at: www.jumpersforgoalposts.ie

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HPV Vaccination Programme to Include Boys

From September 2019, the HPV vaccine will be made freely available to boys as well as girls in their first year of secondary school in the Republic of Ireland. This is part of the HSE's National Immunisation Programme, and is the first year that boys will be offered this jab. Each year, around 400 people are diagnosed with a HPV-caused cancer in Ireland - and one in five of these diagnoses will occur in men. Around 100 people die from HPV-related cancers in Ireland annually. Therefore, high uptake of the vaccination programme is an essential step towards eliminating these cancers. Parents are encouraged to find out more about the vaccination programme in order to reassure themselves of both the need for it and how safe it is. A good place to start is at: www.hpv.ie

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Male Advice Line

According to the most recent research conducted by the National Crime Council in Ireland in 2005 - which explored domestic abuse in Ireland - over 88,000 men in Ireland have been domestically abused by their partner at some point in their lives. This research also highlighted that only 5% of male victims of domestic abuse report the abuse to the Gardai. However, Irish men do not need to suffer alone. The Men's Development Network (MDN) offers national support and guidance to male victims of domestic abuse (along with concerned family and friends) through their Male Advice Line. This Freephone service is open 36 hours per week, from Monday to Friday, by calling: 1800 816 588. MDN also offers free counselling to those who have been affected by domestic abuse and those who are suffering from depression, anxiety and trauma. The counselling service can be accessed by calling: 051 844 260.

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Men on the Move

'Men on the Move' is a 12-week programme for inactive men in Ireland. It uses physical activity as a 'hook' to engage men, with a view to improving their overall health and wellbeing. An evaluation report on the project was published during Men's Health Week 2019. This showed the positive impact of the project, and recommended that it should be further developed and extended across the Republic of Ireland. View the report online at:

Wew.hse.ie/eng/services/news/media/pressrel/men-on-the-move-evaluation-report.pdf

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Eating Disorders Affect Men Too

Eating Disorders are not unique to one gender, nor are they solely a 'female issue'. In 2017, The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland, <u>Bodywhys</u>, recorded a 128% increase in men attending face-to-face support groups. The organisation report that this is not surprising as extreme dieting and purging has increased amongst men in recent years. For anyone struggling with an eating disorder, Bodywhys have a broad range of support and information available including a helpline, face-to-face support groups, online groups, email support, and access to key information on recovery and where to go to get help. See www.bodywhys.ie



WHO Adopts Parental Alienation as Part of the International Classification of Diseases The World Health Organisation (WHO) recently announced that it has indexed parental alienation as part of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). The ICD is the foundation for the identification of health trends and statistics globally, and is the international standard for reporting diseases and health conditions. The announcement by WHO came just days after an International Parental Alienation Awareness Conference was held in Dublin's Trinity College. The aim of this conference, which targeted professionals, was to raise awareness of and address the knowledge gap about parental alienation in Ireland, and to build an understanding of the experience of children and young adults and their families affected by this issue. Parental alienation is the result of psychological manipulation of a child or a young adult into showing unwarranted fear, disrespect or hostility towards a parent (or other family members) and a rejection of a relationship with the alienated parent.

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Migraine Awareness Week

Did you know that many men suffer from migraine? Also, did you know that Migraine Awareness Week will take from 9th - 15th September 2019? ... Find out all the latest news about what is happening / how to find help to cope with this condition at the Migraine Association of Ireland's website: https://migraine.ie

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State of the World's Fathers

'State of the World's Fathers' - produced by <u>Promundo</u> - is a biennial report and advocacy platform which aims to change power structures, policies, and social norms around care work and to advance gender equality. The third State of the World's Fathers report reveals new research on men's caregiving from 11 countries, with additional cross-country analysis of data from over 30 countries. You can download the report at:

https://stateoftheworldsfathers.org/report/state-of-the-worlds-fathers-helping-men-step-up-to-care

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I'm Wrecked!

Tired all the time? Feeling 'burnt out' and in bad form? Are you 'wrecked' every morning even after eight hours sleep? Have you ever wondered about the quality of your sleep? ... The media often focusses on the amount of sleep we are getting, but very little is said about the quality of that sleep. We all envy our children; full of limitless energy. But where did our boundless energy go? We live in a society addicted to stimulants, from energy drinks to espresso. We seem unable to function without these regular boosts. Coupled with nutrition supplements, herbs, pills and potions we fill our bodies, striving for this seemingly unreachable energy of youth. Yet, in truth, your body, itself, has the best mechanism to restore your energy. That mechanism is quality, restorative sleep. If you are not waking up every morning bright eyed and bushy tailed there is something wrong! If you are snoring the night away, your body is sending an audible signal that you cannot breathe properly. The 'midnight strangler' was a term once used to describe the sleep disorder Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA). This is an apt term, an accurate and vivid description for OSA.

Victims of OSA see their airway shutting down many times as they sleep. This results in the body fighting for life; adrenaline being released; heart pounding at the crucial time when you are supposed to be getting essential restorative quality sleep. It is little wonder you feel exhausted when you wake in the morning - having spent the night fighting off a vicious strangler! Dr William C. Dement, the 'Father of Sleep Medicine', estimates that 80% of those with OSA are undiagnosed. This is a massive problem in the western world. Some sources

call it an epidemic. But remember: (1) You don't have to be a snorer, overweight or male to be a victim of OSA. (2) OSA can lead to heart disease, high blood pressure and a host of illnesses. It can even be misdiagnosed as depression. (3) You should get help. Find a health care professional familiar with the condition, and arrange a referral with the help of your GP.

[Written by Dr Patrick O'Beirne, a dental surgeon with a special interest in Dental Sleep Medicine. For more information see http://ballinrobedental.ie/sleep-medicine]

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Male Psychology Conference 2019 Presentations Online

Did you miss the Male Psychology Conference 2019 in London last June? If so, you might be interested in catching-up with what went on by watching videos of some of the presenters at: www.youtube.com/channel/UCd2epsqcEhiF3LzXAkQlhFQ/videos

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ILMI Declaration of Independence

The <u>Independent Living Movement Ireland</u> (ILMI) launched their #DeclarationofIndependence video campaign on Sunday 5th May 2019 as part of European Day on Independent Living. The short film features twenty disabled activists from across the country talking about the need for disabled people to work together, and for issues disabled people face to be seen as equality and human rights issues. Check out this powerful and inspirational clip at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=68CF8q8tuXM

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Events

WHO Europe Men's Health Strategy - Webinar

Global Action on Men's Health (GAMH) is hosting a webinar for NGOs and men's health advocates working in Europe to discuss how they can use the WHO Europe Men's Health Strategy as an advocacy tool. This webinar will take place on Friday 20th September 2019 at 9.30am Ireland / 10.30am CET. The speakers include: Isabel Yordi Aguirre (WHO Europe) who will introduce the men's health strategy; Alan White, Emeritus Professor of Men's Health, Leeds Beckett University, UK; Dr Noel Richardson, Director of the National Centre for Men's Health, Ireland; and Dr Svend Aage Madsen, President of the Men's Health Society in Denmark. For more details, visit: www.eventbrite.com/e/improving-mens-health-in-europe-webinar-on-the-who-mens-health-strategy-tickets-62915211090

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Suicide Prevention: We all have a Part to Play

The Heath, Wellbeing and Inclusion Research Group within the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) is hosting an event titled: 'Suicide Prevention: We all have a part to play'. This will take place on Monday 16th September 2019, from 10.30am - 12.30pm, in Room OG074, the Lanyon Building, QUB. The speaker will be Dr Jerry Reed, who is an internationally recognised figure in the field of suicide prevention, and who has helped to inform and drive public policy changes in the USA. This is a free, open access event, and everyone is welcome to attend.

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

FC RUM

25th Annual Regional Sexual Health Conference

You are invited to the 25th Annual Regional Sexual Health Conference which will be held on Wednesday 13th November 2019, from 9.00am - 5.00pm, in the La Mon Hotel and Country Club, Castlereagh, Belfast. This year's event will bring together a wide range of experts who will present up-to-date research and models from throughout the UK and Ireland via keynote presentations and interactive workshops. These will focus upon: sexual health in Northern Ireland 25 years on; GUM update for Northern Ireland; inequalities and addictions in sexual health; young people; and gender issues. The delegate rate (including lunch) is £60.00. For further details, Tel: 028 9504 7028 or Email: shealth.team@belfasttrust.hscni.net

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Man Up: Masculinities and Mental Health Help-Seeking Behaviours

Understanding the cultural context and history of health can help the global community to respond to present-day challenges. This is the philosophy underpinning WHO-Europe's new 'Culture and Health 2019' series of webinars. The webinars examine the historical and cultural contexts of global health issues, and feature interdisciplinary panels of academics and policymakers. All webinars are live-streamed, with remote audiences encouraged to watch online and ask questions. These webinars aim to engage a broad audience of policy-makers, academics and the general public. The next seminar is titled: 'Man Up: Masculinities and Mental Health Help-Seeking Behaviours' and will take place on the 3rd of September 2019. For more details see: www.euro.who.int/en/data-and-evidence/cultural-contexts-of-health/webinars

Understanding Parental Alienation

You are invited to attend a talk on understanding parental alienation with guest speaker Donna Maria Logue from the <u>La Dolce Vita Project</u>. This will take place on Tuesday 10th September 2019, at 6.30pm, in Jackson's Hotel, Ballybofey, Co. Donegal. The event will explore: what parental alienation is; parental alienating behaviours; coping strategies; sharing lived experiences; the La Dolce Vita Project international conference on parental alienation in April 2020. There will also be time for questions and answers. A €10 attendance donation is requested, and this will be shared between La Dolce Vita Project and An Chéid Chéim Cross-Border Addiction Support. Registration is by email only to: <u>foreverfathersdonegal@gmail.com</u>

The Elephant in the Room - Time to Talk about our Emotions

The Health Improvement, Equality and Involvement Department of the Western Health and Social Care Trust is linking World Suicide Prevention Day on 10th September 2019 and World Mental Health Day on 10th October 2019 to encourage people to talk about the 'elephant in the room' - in other words, the things that we often choose to ignore: our emotions and how we feel. You are cordially invited to a half day launch event to showcase the 'Elephant' interactive campaign pack and a range of resources that you can use in your community, school or workplace to start the conversation. There will be presentations from Conor McCafferty, Director of Zest and the North Star Health and Wellbeing Centre. The launch will take place on Tuesday 10th September 2019, from 10.00am until 1.00pm, in the Bawnacre Centre, Irvinestown, Co. Fermanagh. Refreshments and a light lunch will be provided. Places are limited, so early booking is advised at: www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/whsct-elephant-in-the-room-campaign-launch-tickets-66194179573

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It's Time to Step into The New Story

'A Gathering of Men' is a two-night, experiential retreat for men. Participants will get the opportunity to change 'The Old Story' and step into who they really are - 'The New Story'. It starts on 30th August 2019, at Townley Hall, Drogheda, Co. Louth: www.agatheringofmen.ie



Men's Health Symposium at NUIG

On International Men's Day, Tuesday 19th November 2019, the <u>School of Nursing and Midwifery, National University of Ireland Galway</u> (NUIG), in partnership with the Centre for Nursing and Midwifery Education, Galway, are hosting the first ever Men's Health Symposium at NUIG. This free to attend event for health and allied professionals aims to highlight current issues that affect men's health across their lifespan. The event particularly focuses on the influence masculinity has on men's health, building resilience and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This day-long symposium will include experts, practitioners, researchers in men's health, and several high-profile men's health advocates. Registration will open on Friday 20th September 2019. Be sure to save the date! Address all enquiries to the Symposium Chairperson, Dr. Bróna Mooney, at Email: brona.mooney@nuigalway.ie

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Training

'Men in the Middle' - Training for Trainers

In March 2018, a landmark report titled 'Middle-Aged Men and Suicide in Ireland' (www.mhfi.org/MAMRMreport.pdf) was launched. This was commissioned / coordinated by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland, funded by the National Office for Suicide Prevention, and researched by the National Centre for Men's Health in the Institute of Technology in Carlow. The aim of this qualitative study was to explore the factors underpinning the high suicide rate among middle-aged men (40-59 years old) in the Republic of Ireland, with a view to providing more effective and gender specific programmes, services, and resources that can support their mental health and wellbeing.

The report highlighted that: over the past ten years, the suicide rate among middle-aged men in the Republic of Ireland has been the highest of all age cohorts; suicide and suicidal behaviour is more prevalent among certain 'at risk' groups'; a range of mid-life transitions are associated with challenges for these men; reaching a crisis point is the most common trigger to seeking help for many men; there is a diverse range of barriers and enablers which influence the dynamics of engaging with middle-aged men in relation to their mental health.

To meet the need from practitioners to develop meaningful relationships with this target group, the Engage National Men's Health Training Programme has now developed a new workshop called 'Men in the Middle'. Applications are being sought from experienced facilitators to participate in a Training for Trainers programme to upskill them to deliver this workshop across the Republic of Ireland. More details can be found at: www.mhfi.org/Engage7Overview.pdf

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MA in Advanced Facilitation Skills for Promoting Health and Wellbeing

Do you want to become a highly skilled facilitator and advance within your chosen profession or seek new employment opportunities? ... If so, the Master of Arts in Advanced Facilitation Skills for Promoting Health and Wellbeing is an innovative practice orientated programme; the only one of its kind nationally. It is designed to enhance personal growth and development, and to advance the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies required to effectively promote health and wellbeing with groups, individuals and key populations. Experiential learning is central to the course, and this supports students to develop their skills through the medium of the group process, reflective practice, practical experience and research. For more information, visit: www.wit.ie/wd591

Sexual Life with Prostate Cancer - New Online Resources

The impact on sexual wellbeing for men and their partners who have been treated for prostate cancer has been widely recognised as a significant unmet need. A collaborative team of researchers, support organisations, and patient volunteers has developed two online resources to address this important gap: (1) The online self-management resource (for men and partners) can be accessed at home. This provides personalised information, support and strategies to help men cope with sexual challenges after treatment for prostate cancer. It also includes specific information for single men, younger men, and black men who have been diagnosed and treated for Prostate Cancer. This resource can be accessed at:

http://prostate.lifeguidewebsites.org (2) The e-learning resource (for healthcare professionals) has been developed to increase awareness of sexual care needs, promote routine sexual care engagement and provide the language, structure and content to guide conversations around

sexual wellbeing. It can be accessed at: http://talkingaboutsex-prostatecancer.org

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WHSCT Men's Health Workshop

Applications are invited for a workshop which focuses upon increasing understanding of men's health issues and how to engage men with health and social services. This full day 'Engage' training is being offered by the Western Health and Social Care Trust's Health Improvement Team, and will take place on the 26th of September 2019 in Omagh, Co. Tyrone. It is suitable for any practitioner, of any gender, who works with men in any setting. The workshop will explore: why we need to work with men as a specific group; understanding men through their eyes; gender bias and health; our own value base, experience and attitudes; barriers to men seeking help and support; opportunities to create the conditions for positive engagement. For more information, Email: health.improvement@westerntrust.hscni.net or Tel: 02871 865127.

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Understanding Chemsex

You are invited to apply for a free place on a course focusing upon: 'Understanding Chemsex'. This will take place on Wednesday 2nd October 2019, from 9.30am - 1.30pm, in HIV Ireland, 70 Eccles Street, Dublin 7. This programme aims to increase participants' knowledge and awareness of Chemsex and issues related to this type of drug use. Participants will gain knowledge about this growing trend and the confidence to deal with issues that may arise when working with population groups that engage in Chemsex. The training will be beneficial to sexual health workers, health advisers, drug service providers, LGBT services, mental health practitioners, GPs, counsellors, social workers, nurses, and other professionals who may work with / have contact with people who use drugs associated with Chemsex. Registration is essential. For further details, Email: susan.donlon@hivireland.ie

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Elevate Capacity Building Training

The Elevate Capacity Building Team within the <u>Community Development and Health Network</u> is delivering practical programmes in each Health and Social Care Trust area in Northern Ireland. This is a free, interactive, activity-based, two-day training course which focuses upon community development as a way to reduce health inequalities. The sessions will cover: the values and principles of community development; what health inequalities are, why they exist and how they look in your community; how to know you are making a difference in your community and how to share this learning with others; how to action plan and take ideas forward in your local community. Anyone, from any sector, with an interest in community development and health inequalities is invited to apply for a place. Participants must be available for both days of the training. However, there are limited places on each training programme and booking is essential. Find out more at: https://elevateni.org



Research

How Emergency Departments Deal with Self-Harm

Research has found that people who present to Emergency Departments following an episode of self-harm sometimes do not receive the care they need. It has also been found that some people leave the Emergency Department before being assessed by a clinician. The voices of service users are key to understanding how responses and outcomes may be improved. Researchers at the School of Nursing and Midwifery in Trinity College Dublin, in partnership with 3Ts, are seeking to interview people (aged 18 and over) in the Republic of Ireland about their experiences of presenting to the Emergency Department following an episode of self-harm or suicidal behaviour. For more information and/or to participate, contact Dr Louise Doyle at Email: louise.doyle@tcd.ie | Tel: 01 8963102.

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Understanding the Needs of those Affected by Cancer

The <u>Irish Cancer Society</u> (ICS) is preparing a new five year strategy. As part of this process, the Cancer Prevention Team is keen to better understand your needs going forward. This will allow them to tailor their strategy, and to ensure that health promotion, cancer prevention, early detection and support for cancer patients is a priority in the future. You are invited to participate in a short stakeholder survey to share your views on what areas ICS should prioritise. To take part, visit: https://survey.euro.confirmit.com/wix/p1875252977.aspx

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Men Wanted for CHERISH Carers' Survey

Do you provide care to a family member or loved one? ... If so, researchers on the CHERISH initiative at Maynooth University, who aim to promote a 'Think Carer' approach in health and social care services, would love to hear about your experiences. Over 39% of family carers in Ireland are men and, therefore, the research team would like to encourage the participation of men in this important research. Please consider taking the time to complete this anonymous and confidential survey, and share it with men who may be providing care. It will take about 10-15 minutes to complete, and the responses will be used to inform the design of future services to carers in community healthcare settings. You can take part by visiting: https://maynoothpsychology.eu.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_e4Kc6cRdqhaxwUZ

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Parenting NI - Big Parenting Survey 2019

Last year, Parenting NI launched their Big Parenting Survey - a first of its kind study into the realities of parenting in Northern Ireland. The 2018 survey had over 1,000 responses from parents; providing valuable insights about the struggles, hopes and successes of parents from every part of the community. This year, Parenting NI are encouraging as many parents as possible to take part in a study which focuses upon the role and influence of technology on parenting. This is available online at: https://bps2019.questionpro.com

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A Psychoactive Paradox of Masculinities: Cohesive and Competitive Relations Between Drug Taking Irish Men

Dr Clay Darcy has recently published a peer reviewed research article in the 'Gender, Place & Culture' journal (https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0966369X.2019.1609427) which explores one dimension of Ireland's illicit drug landscape: men's predominance as recreational users of illicit psychoactive substances. This places a gender lens on Irish men's drug taking practices to reveal how men's drug use, and drug intoxication, converge with masculinities in paradoxical ways. Drawing from twenty in-depth interviews with Irish men who identified as illicit recreational drug users, their drug histories and experiences are unpacked; making visible

the intersections between men's use of illicit psychoactive substances, gender, culture and place. This paper explores how illicit drugs can, at times, have paradoxical uses within homosocial spaces. Men's bedrooms, house parties, the street, nightclubs and pubs were common places where men engaged in the recreational use of illicit drugs, and it was in these spaces that men's illicit drug use was interpreted as a symbolic activity with gendered meanings. By employing a masculinities lens to analyse men's recreational use of illicit psychoactive substances, men's drug taking interactions reveal intricacies within the gender order. Thus, illicit drugs are resources that some men utilise to navigate conventional understandings of masculinity, albeit in paradoxical ways.

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Attitudes to Transgender People in Northern Ireland

The 2018 Northern Ireland Life and Times (NILT) survey included a set of questions exploring public attitudes towards transgender people. This is the first time that NILT has explored this area, and the results provide a useful baseline of public opinion. Analysis of the data was undertaken by Gail Neil (Ulster University) and Siobhan McAlister (Queen's University), who published a Research Update titled: 'The Missing T: Baselining Attitudes Towards Transgender People in Northern Ireland'. You can download this paper at: www.ark.ac.uk/ARK/sites/default/files/2019-06/update128.pdf

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Web Links

Men's Issues on the Web ...

Health literacy influences men's active and passive cancer information seeking Understanding masculinities to improve men's health

Belfast series 'My Left Nut' focuses on testicular cancer fears

Older LGBT+ people face significant obstacles in Irish society

E-cigarettes and heated tobacco products: an evidence review

Almost half of men have low health awareness when it comes to cancer

John Wall, diagnosed with prostate cancer aged 46, shares his story [podcast]

Steve - a documentary to save men from suicide [video clip]

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Next Edition

Do you know of anything (research, events, resources, news etc.) affecting men and boys which should be included in the next edition of 'E-Male Matters'? ...

There's a simple template for all articles. Let us know (within one paragraph and no more than 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

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

