



E-Male Matters

November and December 2019

The newsletter of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland

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News

Men's Health Week 2020 - **THE** Date for your New Diary!

Believe it or not, it's that time again. Yes, it's time to get the most important date of the year into your new 2020 diary ... [International Men's Health Week](#) (MHW) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. This coming year, it will run from **Monday 15th until Sunday 21st June 2020**.

Every year the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) convenes an all-island Planning Group for MHW. Would you be interested in joining with others from across the island of Ireland to help to shape MHW 2020? ... This can be done in many ways - from participating in meetings to electronic communication. All input is very welcome, and helps to make the week stronger and more relevant.

The first meeting of the Planning Group took place on Friday 29th November 2019, and the second gathering will happen on Monday 27th January 2020 in Dundalk, Co. Louth. Even if you cannot make the meetings, your feedback on developments via email / phone would still be very helpful. If you would be interested in being part of the planning process for 2020 (in any way), email Colin Fowler at: colin@mhfi.org

However, even if this is not possible, why not put the dates of MHW 2020 into your new diary, and start thinking about how your group / workplace / church / community / sports club ... could do something to mark this week? It's never too early to start planning!

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Invitation to Tender: Men's Health in Numbers

The [Men's Health Forum in Ireland](#) was established in response to the growing recognition of the need to address the poor health status of males on the island of Ireland. However, one of the first challenges facing MHFI was to gain access to reliable data upon which to plan future interventions. This remains an ongoing concern.

This barrier was, initially, overcome when MHFI launched its '*Men's Health in Ireland*' report in January 2004 (www.mhfi.org/fullreport.pdf). This document provided the most comprehensive overview of key statistics on local men's health ever collated up to that time. It offered clear evidence of men's health needs, and a roadmap for action. Importantly, it also provided a baseline against which to measure progress in the future. However, since 2004, there has been no further large scale attempt to statistically map what (if anything) has changed in the realm of men's health in Ireland.

In 2020, MHFI will be twenty-one years old. It is, therefore, important for the Forum to reflect upon how the health of men and boys has progressed during this period. To achieve this, MHFI will be issuing an 'Invitation to Tender' in the New Year - to commission (mostly) statistical research which identifies changes in men's health in Ireland since 2004, and provides a detailed snapshot of men's health currently. If you would like to receive this Invitation to Tender when it becomes available, please email: tenders@mhfi.org

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Belfast Men's Health Group Spinathon

Congratulations to [Belfast Men's Health Group](#) who raised £942.62 for the 'Friends of the Cancer Centre' after doing a Spinathon on International Men's Day 2020. This event provided an ideal opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of physical activity to cancer prevention in men. It also supported the work of a great practical action group.

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Everest Climber and Professional Boxer Climb Carrauntoohil to Raise Awareness of Parental Alienation

Cork's Pat Falvey - the first person in the world to complete the Seven Summits twice by climbing Mount Everest from its north and south sides - climbed Carrauntoohil on Monday 11th November 2019 to raise awareness of parental alienation in Ireland. He was joined by Middleweight Professional Boxer Spike O'Sullivan, campaigner Andrew Teague, and some parents. Parental alienation is where one parent negatively influences their children or young adults against the other parent; thereby creating alienation that is destructive and life lasting. This was recently indexed as a health disorder by the World Health Organisation, and has been listed as a criminal offence in several countries worldwide. In cases of parental alienation, a child may ally themselves strongly with one parent and reject a relationship with the other parent, despite a previous warm and loving relationship. This impacts upon the child themselves, the parent and wider family members. Activists are calling on Councillors, Senators and TDs to make a change for children who are alienated from a parent through no fault of their own, and have set-up an online petition at <https://my.uplift.ie/petitions/make-parental-alienation-an-offence>

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Global Action on Men's Health Webinar Now Online

In the autumn, [Global Action on Men's Health](#) (GAMH) hosted a webinar for NGOs and men's health advocates to discuss how they can use the WHO Europe Men's Health Strategy as an advocacy tool. This took place on the 20th of September 2019. The speakers included Isabel Yordi Aguirre (WHO Europe) who introduced the Men's Health Strategy, Alan White (Emeritus Professor of Men's Health, Leeds Beckett University UK), Dr Noel Richardson (National Centre for Men's Health, Ireland), Dr Svend Aage Madsen (President of the Men's Health Society in Denmark), and Nikki van der Gaag (Promundo). An audio recording of the webinar is available at: <https://youtu.be/BwXWsG4oras>

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Launch of YourMentalHealth Freephone

In October 2019, the HSE launched the 24/7 YourMentalHealth Freephone. This offers signposting to mental health support and services - provided by both the HSE and their funded partners across the country. This is not a counselling service, but a member of the team can tell you about where, how and when to access local support services across the Republic of Ireland. The Freephone number is: 1800 742 444.

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International Journal of Men's Social and Community Health - Special Themed Issue

The [International Journal of Men's Social and Community Health](#) is seeking to publish a special themed issue of the Journal focusing on how we can utilise an intersectional lens to more systematically conceptualise, design and implement strategies to achieve equity in men's health and well-being. The goal of this special issue is to bring together scholars who are using an intersectional lens to advance men's health and well-being to promote men's health equity. This issue will include conceptual papers and qualitative, quantitative, and intervention research that illustrate the importance of, and how to use, an intersectional lens to advance men's health and well-being. The Guest Editor and Journal are especially interested in papers that demonstrate how to incorporate intersectionality in programmes or policies to improve men's health and achieve men's health equity. Find out more about how to submit a paper at: <http://ijmsch.com/index.php/IJMSCH/announcement/view/1>

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The Case for a Catch-Up HPV Vaccination Programme for Boys

The vaccination of adolescent boys in the UK has now begun. The implementation of a universal HPV vaccination programme is an enormous step forward in public health and health equity, and will result in better health and wellbeing outcomes for both sexes. However, there is no 'catch-up' programme for boys who are too old to receive the vaccination when they are in Year 8 in England and Wales, Year S1 in Scotland or Year 9 in Northern Ireland. An opportunity is being missed to protect a very significant number of boys who will otherwise be left at risk of HPV-caused diseases. [HPV Action](#) outlines the case for a catch-up vaccination programme for boys at: www.hpvaction.org/news/hpv-action-sets-out-its-case-for-a-catch-up-vaccination-programme-for-boys

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Green Ribbon Campaign Impact Report 2019

In May this year, [See Change](#) launched their 7th Annual 'Green Ribbon Campaign' to kick-start conversations that can help to end the stigma attached to mental health issues. The report on this campaign can be downloaded from: <https://seechange.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/GR-Report-2019.pdf>

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Events

'United as One' Conferences

The [La Dolce Vita Project](#), in association with [Parental Alienation Europe](#), will be hosting two 'United As One' conferences on 21st April 2020 in Croke Park, Dublin, and in The City Hotel, Derry/Londonderry on 23rd April 2020. Both conferences will focus upon the issue of parental alienation and are suitable for professionals (including psychotherapists, social workers, psychiatrists, counsellors, barristers, solicitors, guardians of court, family support workers) and anyone working with those impacted by domestic abuse, violence and parental alienation. More details are available at: <https://parentalalienation.eu/parental-alienation-conferences-2020-dublin-and-derry/>

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Training

Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion (FPSHP)

The FPSHP is a 10-day, comprehensive, capacity building programme for service providers who want to develop their confidence, skills and knowledge in the area of sexual health promotion, and to incorporate sexual health promotion into their work. It is aimed at service providers from the health, education, community and youth sectors who have the potential and capacity to undertake Sexual Health Promotion within their organisation. The HSE Health Promotion and Improvement, Health and Wellbeing Division, will be running this course between February and June 2020 in Galway City. For a full description, visit: www.mhfi.org/FPSHP.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

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Research

Do Your Whack

In 2016, in-depth research was conducted into the experiences and needs of young men aged 18-24 imprisoned in Hydebank Wood College in Belfast. It included: nine months of participant observation within the institution; the researcher participating in educational classes, recreational activities and association; twenty-six semi-structured interviews with young men; and six interviews with prison officers and support staff. *'Do Your Whack: Investigating the needs and experiences of young men imprisoned in Northern Ireland'* is an [ARK](#) Policy Brief which highlights the key findings of this research and examines the implications for policy. Download a copy at: www.ark.ac.uk/ARK/sites/default/files/2019-11/policybrief13_0.pdf

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Healthy Ireland Summary Report 2019

The Healthy Ireland Survey is an annual interviewer-administered face-to-face survey commissioned by the Department of Health. It is part of the Healthy Ireland Framework to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Ireland. This report provides an overview of results from the fifth wave of this survey. The fifth wave consisted of 7,413 interviews conducted with a representative sample of the population, aged 15 and older, living in Ireland. Respondents were selected using a probability-based methodology and interviewed in their homes. You can download the report at:

<https://assets.gov.ie/41141/e5d6fea3a59a4720b081893e11fe299e.pdf>

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The meanings and understandings that men give to their experience of adolescence while growing-up in Ireland

Are you between 18 and 40 years of age; were you born and raised in Ireland; and have experienced suicide ideation, self-harm, or attempted suicide in your adolescence or adulthood? If so, a PhD researcher at Dublin City University would like to invite you to take part in a study focusing upon your experience of growing-up in Ireland. The purpose of this study is to explore the meanings and understandings that men give to their experience of adolescence while growing up in Ireland. The study will require participants to take part in an hour long (approximately) audio-recorded interview at a suitable time and venue. Alternatively, the interview can be conducted by video-link if preferred. Participation will be confidential, and anonymity will be protected at all stages of the study. For more information, contact Brian Holohan (the researcher) at: 087 1849418.

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Consultation on the Draft Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention Training Framework

The Public Health Agency (PHA) Training Framework for Mental Emotional Health and Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention (The Framework) is in line with the Protect Life 2 Strategy to reduce the suicide rate in Northern Ireland. It has been developed to provide clarity on the varying steps and types of training available in Northern Ireland, and to support knowledge and skills development. It provides a pathway through the varying steps of training, and has been developed to encourage consistency and appropriateness in skills and awareness development. The PHA invite you to participate in a consultation on the Draft Training Framework - which was developed following extensive engagement and consultation events held in 2017 and 2018. To participate: (i) download and read the draft Training Framework (<http://pha.site/framework>); (ii) answer the questions in the Survey Monkey questionnaire (<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BW2CNMW>); (iii) submit your responses by clicking on the box at the end of the survey. The consultation will close on Friday 10th January 2020. If you have any queries, email: helen.gibson@hscni.net

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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. They are particularly keen to hear from men in parenting roles. This survey is available online at: <https://bps2019.questionpro.com>

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Suicide Statistics in Northern Ireland

These tables detail the number of suicides registered each year in Northern Ireland and provide additional information on age, sex, geographical area and time taken to register the death. They have been produced as an addendum to the [Annual Report of the Registrar General](#). See: www.nisra.gov.uk/publications/suicide-statistics

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Participants Required for a Study of Men's Compulsive use of Internet Pornography

Psychology researchers from Trinity College Dublin are seeking to interview men who engage in compulsive use of internet pornography about the personal meaning they attach to such use. This study will involve one-to-one interviews with individuals, and will look at how the phenomenon of compulsive pornography use has impacted the lives of those that take part. They are looking for men over the age of 18 who experience psychological distress, a negative impact on their relationships, or interference in the ability to live life in the manner they wish as a result of their compulsive use of internet pornography. Anyone interested in taking part can find out more details about the study and how to participate by emailing Michael McDonald (Psychologist in Clinical Training) at mcdonam8@tcd.ie or call 089 4852578.

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The Influence of Masculine Norms and Mental Health on Health Literacy among Men

Adherence to masculine norms, such as self-reliance, has been thought to predict lower health literacy. Additionally, males with poor mental health may have low health literacy. Using two waves of the 'Ten to Men' cohort, this study examined whether masculinity and depressive symptomology explained three aspects of health literacy among men. Read the full journal article at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1557988319873532>

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Men's Issues on the Web ...

[How men can handle soaring stress levels](#)

[Why is it so hard for men to admit that they're lonely?](#)

[Doctors call on workplaces to ban sale of sugary drinks](#)

[Gannon encourages men to talk mental health](#)

[Opening Up: an exploration into domestic abuse against men](#)

[One-third of people believe protein bars are healthy](#)

[Preventing suicide: the basic mistake holding us back](#)

[Who's standing up for men these days?](#)

[Raising the profile of men's health](#)

[How adolescent boys' need for friendship affects their mental health](#) [podcast]

[Loneliness: the hidden, unspoken issue affecting middle-aged men](#)

[Men and the drug buzz: masculinity and men's motivations for illicit drug use](#)

[Men more likely than women to contract cancer](#)

[Limerick leads 'Sheds for Life' initiative](#)

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Next Edition

Due to the Christmas / New Year holidays, the next edition of 'E-Male Matters' will be released in February 2020. Do you know of anything (research, events, resources, news etc.) affecting men and boys which should be included in it? ...

There's a simple format 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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**E-Male Matters is also available online at:
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

