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## “What Goes On Inside Men’s Heads?”

### - Launch of competition to get inside the world of ‘The Invisible Man’

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Despite the fact that males constitute almost half of the population of Ireland, the world of local men and boys is still, often, a mystery to most of us. However, during [Men’s Health Week 2011](#), the [Men’s Health Forum in Ireland](#) (MHFI), supported by the [Irish Cancer Society](#) (ICS), is hoping to shine a light into what men are thinking about. Today, MHFI and ICS are launching an island-wide poster caption competition. This seeks to get men to think about their life, their needs, and the health issues which face them. It asks men: “what are you talking about?”

Dr Noel Richardson, Chairperson of the Men’s Health Forum in Ireland, has said:

*“I’m not a great betting man, but I reckon if I was to organise a street survey, anywhere in Ireland, wherein I asked passers-by to describe what ‘women’s issues’ are, it’s very likely that most people would make a reasonably good attempt at it. Yet, at the same time, I’m quite sure that many of these same people would find it very difficult to comprehend what ‘men’s issues’ are, what they might include or, indeed, why we should even pose this question in the first place. ‘The Invisible Man’ is not just a fictional character”.*

International Men’s Health Week 2011 will run from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> until Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June this year. To highlight this week, respected Irish comedians [Joe Rooney](#) (*Father Ted* and *Killinaskully*) and [Paul Tylak](#) (*Stew* and *Messers Tylak and Rooney*) are starring in an Ireland-wide poster campaign to raise awareness of the week. These [posters](#) give a simple message to men: “These are challenging times. It’s no joke. Let’s talk”.

Certainly, the health of men in Ireland is nothing to joke about:

- Local men die, on average, about five years younger than women do.
- Males have higher death rates than women for all of the leading causes of death.
- Poor lifestyles are responsible for a high proportion of chronic diseases.

Late presentation to health services leads to a large number of problems becoming untreatable ...

To encourage men to get more involved in Men's Health Week 2011, an interactive version of the poster has been produced and is available online. This poster features the two main characters with 'thought bubbles' coming out of their heads. Males from across Ireland (aged 16 years and over) are being invited to submit suggestions as to what the men in the poster might be thinking about during these 'challenging times' - especially in relation to their own health and well-being.

MHFI and ICS are inviting men to enter a free, island-wide, poster caption competition. They are also asking local groups that work with men to encourage their members to join in. The rules are simple:

- Download the poster at: [www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2011.html#Poster](http://www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2011.html#Poster)
- Save the file to your own computer.
- Open the document, and come up with an idea for what the two men in the poster might be thinking about.
- Type your idea into the 'thought bubbles' on the poster.
- Fill in your contact details on the attached form.
- Save the file, and email a copy of it to: [posters@mhfi.org](mailto:posters@mhfi.org)
- All submissions must be returned by 5.00pm on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2011.

A panel of judges will review entries and will announce their decision in late July 2011. The judging panel will then select three entries which, they feel, best represents men's lives / issues / concerns ... in Ireland today.

The three winners will each receive a pair of tickets for the launch of the '[Movember](#)' celebrations - including travel expenses and overnight accommodation in Dublin.

Further information can be obtained by contacting ...

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## **Editor's Notes:**

- International Men's Health Week (MHW) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. This year it will run from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> until Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2011. It is celebrated in most European countries, as well as in the USA, Australia and a number of other places worldwide. See [www.mhfi.org/international-mens-health-week.html](http://www.mhfi.org/international-mens-health-week.html) for more details on MHW 2011 and activity which took place during previous years.
- [The Men's Health Forum in Ireland](http://www.mhfi.org) (MHFI) is a charity which works on an all-Ireland basis to enhance the health of men and boys. It is a voluntary network of individuals and organisations, men and women, which seeks to identify the key concerns relating to male health and to increase understanding of these issues.
- The [Irish Cancer Society](http://www.ics.ie) plays a vital role in achieving world-class cancer services in Ireland, seeks to ensure that fewer people get cancer, and helps those that do to have better outcomes. ICS's goals are focused around prevention, survival and quality of life with three programme areas to achieve them: advocacy, cancer services and research.
- The overall aims of [MHW](http://www.mhfi.org) are to: heighten awareness of preventable health problems for males of all ages; support men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices / activities; encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males.
- MHFI recognises that there are a lot of organisations and groups throughout Ireland who can contribute to the health and well-being of men and boys. This work is not solely applicable only to those who work directly in the health field. To further the aims of MHW 2011, MHFI convened an all-island Planning and Advisory Group. Individuals from a broad range of organisations (see [www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2011.html#Planning](http://www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-2011.html#Planning)) inputted to the planning process.
- During MHW 2011, a range of activities and events will take place throughout Ireland. These are organised by locally-based groups. Details of some of these are available on the MHFI website ([www.mhfi.org/mhw2011events.pdf](http://www.mhfi.org/mhw2011events.pdf)) and are promoted via Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/MensHealthWeek](http://www.facebook.com/MensHealthWeek)
- Copies of the MHW posters, logos, and image pack can be downloaded at: [www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-image-pack.html](http://www.mhfi.org/mens-health-week-image-pack.html)