
MEN'S HEALTH MATTERS

- men and boys challenged to 'make the time and take the time' to improve their health during Men's Health Week 2019

Everyone - men, families, communities and service providers - is being urged to 'make the time and take the time' to do something positive to improve the health of men and boys in Ireland. That's the message from the Men's Health Forum in Ireland (MHFI) as the final countdown to International Men's Health Week begins.

Running from Monday 10th June to Sunday 16th June (Father's Day), the week aims to raise awareness of preventable health problems, support men and boys to live healthier lives, and encourage them to seek help or treatment early.

Organisers are encouraging men and boys, and the important people in their lives, to create the space and opportunities to do something realistic and practical to improve their health.

Men and boys can get involved in the week by, for example, making the time to:

- Read the free Men's Health Week 'Man Manual' at:
www.mhfi.org/challenges2019.pdf
- Find out about the opening hours at their local GP surgery and visit them if they have any concerns regarding their health.
- Make at least one journey by foot or bicycle each day instead of going by car.
- Try some fruit or vegetables they've never tasted before or think they don't like.
- Re-connect with family and friends.
- Join a group or take up a sport.
- Find a friend to quit smoking with and seek advice on how to stop.
- Get their blood pressure checked.
- Reflect on their own mental fitness ...

Although a lot of progress has been made to improve men's health across the island of Ireland, challenges still remain. These include:

- Local men die, on average, up to four years younger than women do.
- Poor lifestyles (including smoking, drinking, poor diet and lack of exercise) are responsible for a high proportion of chronic diseases.
- Males have higher death rates than women for all of the leading causes of death.
- Men's mental health needs are often not recognised or met.
- Late presentation to health services leads to a large number of problems becoming untreatable ...

Michael Lynch, Chairperson of the Men's Health Forum in Ireland and Director of Men's Action Network, said:

"This week is a great opportunity to shine a light on men's health across the island of Ireland, and for everyone to have a conversation about how to improve the health and wellbeing of men and boys. It's also a timely reminder for men to check their own physical and mental health and to do something practical and realistic to improve it. A broad range of events and activities are being organised across the island of Ireland, and this is the perfect time to get involved."

Colin Fowler, Director of Operations for the Men's Health Forum in Ireland, added:

"The starting point for improving the health of males is to recognise and acknowledge that men's health matters. However, this is not enough on its own. It also needs to be followed-up by action, and this requires making the time and putting in the effort. While men, themselves, need to play a role in taking control of their health and wellbeing, it is not just an issue for individual men.

We know that health can be determined by other factors outside of men's personal control. There is a need for policymakers, service providers and society as a whole to recognise the role they need to play. In our experience, if men are offered positive choices, and given the support and opportunities they need, they will succeed in living a healthier life."

ENDS

[followed by Editor's Notes]

EDITOR'S NOTES

1. For more information or interviews, contact:

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With notice, interviews conducted in Irish can also be arranged.

2. Men's Health Week is celebrated across Europe, the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and many other countries.

3. In Ireland, Men's Health Week is coordinated by the Men's Health Forum in Ireland with support from over 80 partner organisations. Financial support comes from the Health Service Executive and the Public Health Agency.

4. The Men's Health Forum in Ireland (www.mhfi.org) is a charity which works on an all-island basis to improve 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.

5. Key information on Men's Health Week on the island of Ireland is available online ...

- Full overview of Men's Health Week 2019: www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-2019.html
- Briefing paper which answers all of the most common questions: www.mhfi.org/mhw2019toolbox.pdf
- Men's Health Week posters and images: www.mhfi.org/mhw/mhw-image-pack.html
- Practical suggestions for organisations on how they can get involved: www.mhfi.org/mhw2019celebrateit.pdf
- Latest developments: www.facebook.com/MensHealthWeek and www.twitter.com/MensHealthIRL

6. Each day of / leading up to Men's Health Week 2019 will focus upon a specific issue:

- Friday 7th June - Men's Health Week - it's a matter of fact
- Saturday 8th June - Connections do matter

- Sunday 9th June - What we eat matters
- Monday 10th June - Mental fitness really matters
- Tuesday 11th June - The heart of the matter
- Wednesday 12th June - Cancer awareness matters
- Thursday 13th June - Quitting smoking matters
- Friday 14th June - Drinking less matters
- Saturday 15th June - Sports Saturday... being active matters
- Sunday 16th June - Family matters

To view the social media Posts and Tweets planned for #MensHealthWeek visit:

www.mhfi.org/Tweets2019.pdf

7. 15,000 copies of the 'Challenges and Choices' Man Manual have been given out to men across Ireland. This booklet issues ten simple and practical challenges to men. After each challenge, there is a reason why it is important to think about this issue. It then offers three choices for action (Do Nothing, DIY, Find an Expert), and explains the consequences of each option. A low resolution PDF preview copy of the Man Manual can be accessed online at: www.mhfi.org/challenges2019.pdf

8. The photograph attached to this Press Release shows key men's health advocates launching the final countdown to Men's Health Week 2019 at an event organised by the Men's Development Network.