



# Men's Development Network

Better Lives for Men, Better Lives for All



Men's  
Development  
Network  
HEALTH

## The Men's Development Network CLG. (MDN)

## National Men's Health Programme (NMHP)

Lorcan Brennan  
National Training & Development Officer  
The Men's Development Network



# Men's Development Network

Better Lives for Men, Better Lives for All

## **Supporting Ourselves as Men for Health & Wellbeing**

*Minding Ourselves  
Through Challenging Times*

# Living Well With and Beyond Cancer Conference

📅 Jun 2, 8:30AM to Jun 3, 4:30PM IST



# Irish Cancer Society

[www.cancer.ie](http://www.cancer.ie)



## Men's Health

Information about male-specific cancer risks and prevention tactics, including warning signs and publications.

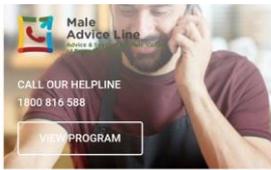
Find out more



## Common cancers that affect men

The most common cancers affecting the male body and lifestyle.

Find out more



**Male Advice Line**  
CALL OUR HELPLINE  
1800 816 588  
[VIEW PROGRAM](#)



**MEN ENDING DOMESTIC ABUSE**  
[VIEW PROGRAM](#)



**Men's Development Network**  
NATIONAL MEN'S HEALTH PROGRAMME  
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 051-844260/1  [men@mensnetwork.ie](mailto:men@mensnetwork.ie)



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**NEWSLETTER**  
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Search

[HSE.ie](#) > [Coronavirus](#)

# COVID-19 (coronavirus)

COVID-19 is a new illness that can affect your lungs and airways. It's caused by a virus called coronavirus.



Stay safe. Protect each other.

**Download the COVID Tracker**  
**today.**



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# HSE.IE

# Little Things Campaign

**LITTLE THINGS  
CAN MAKE A  
BIG DIFFERENCE**

[yourmentalhealth.ie](http://yourmentalhealth.ie) 

#littlethings



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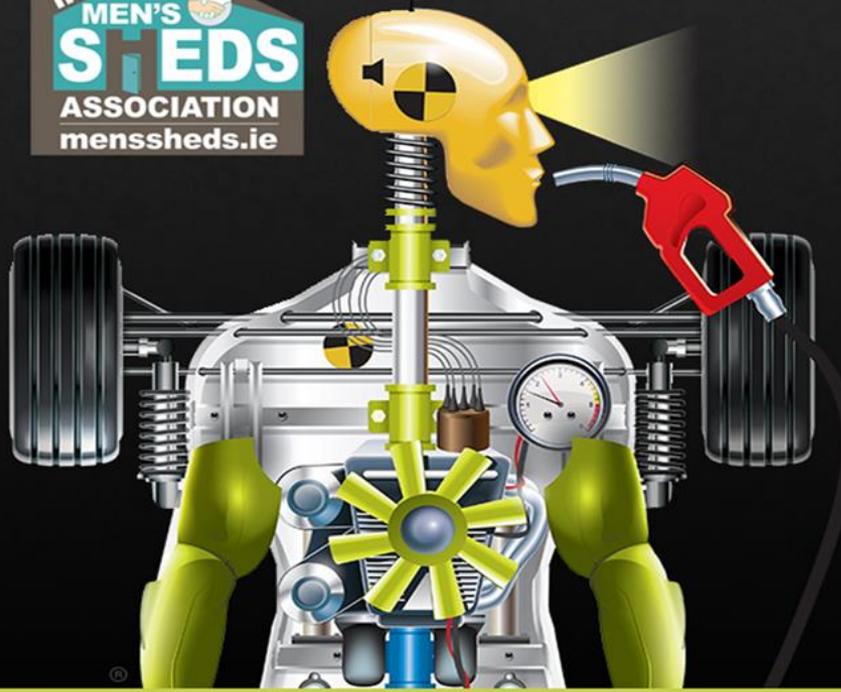
## Cancer Information & Services



### Cancer Information

Learn about the most common cancers affecting both men and women in Ireland, including: bowel, breast, lung, prostate, skin cancer and more.

## SPANNER IN THE WORKS?®



# WHEN WAS YOUR LAST SERVICE?

Knowing when to have your car checked is no different than keeping your body in peak condition.

# MEN'S HEALTH WEEK 2021

What will you be doing to mark this year's **Men's Health Week 14-20 June 2021** This year, Men's Health Week on the island of Ireland will focus on '**Making the Connections**' and the call to action will be:

-**CHECK IN** with yourself to see how you are coping/feeling, and to identify any health worries that you might have.

-**CHECK UP** on your family, friends, neighbours, colleagues to see how they're doing and to offer support.

-If you notice anything worrying or which needs attention, **CHECK IT OUT** and seek information, help, support or treatment.





[www.mhfi.org](http://www.mhfi.org)



Lorcan Brennan  
WHO I AM? *Who I'm NOT...*

# Men's Development Network



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*NGO supporting the Development of Men in Ireland addressing issues such as gender equality & men's health*

## **Our national programmes include:**

- Male advice line*
- Domestic Violence Perpetrator Prog*
- Health Programme*
- Men's Development Prog*
- Advocacy White Ribbon,  
"We don't buy it"*

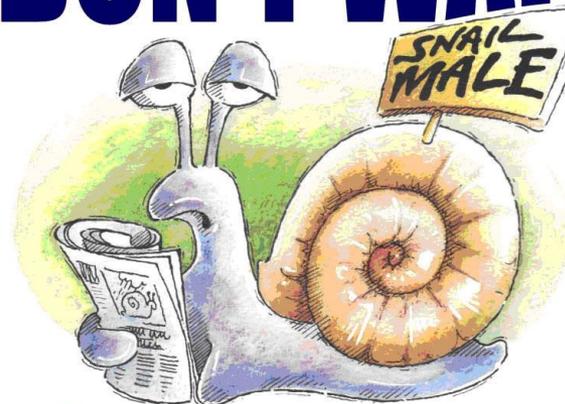
# KEY MESSAGE



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- ▶ Remember if in doubt
- ▶ Don't Delay
- ▶ Go Today

## DON'T WAIT



*talk to your doctor now!*



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# Men's Health & Wellbeing

## *Different Types of Men*

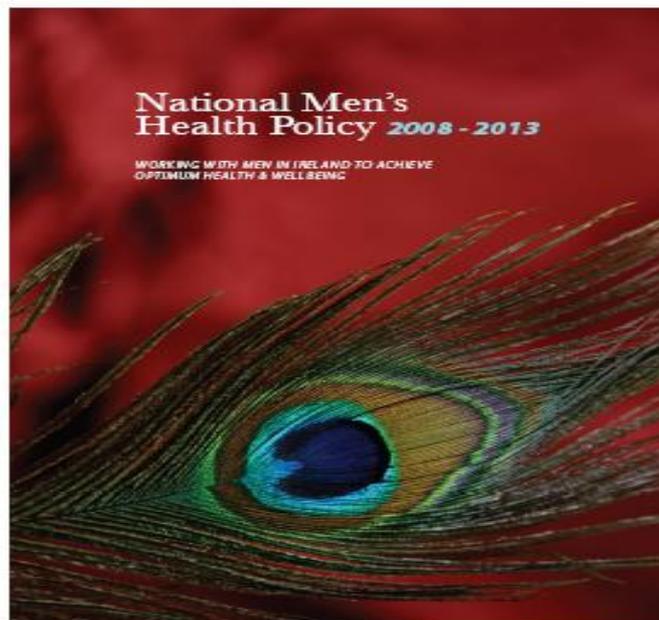


# What is a 'Men's Health Issue?' ...



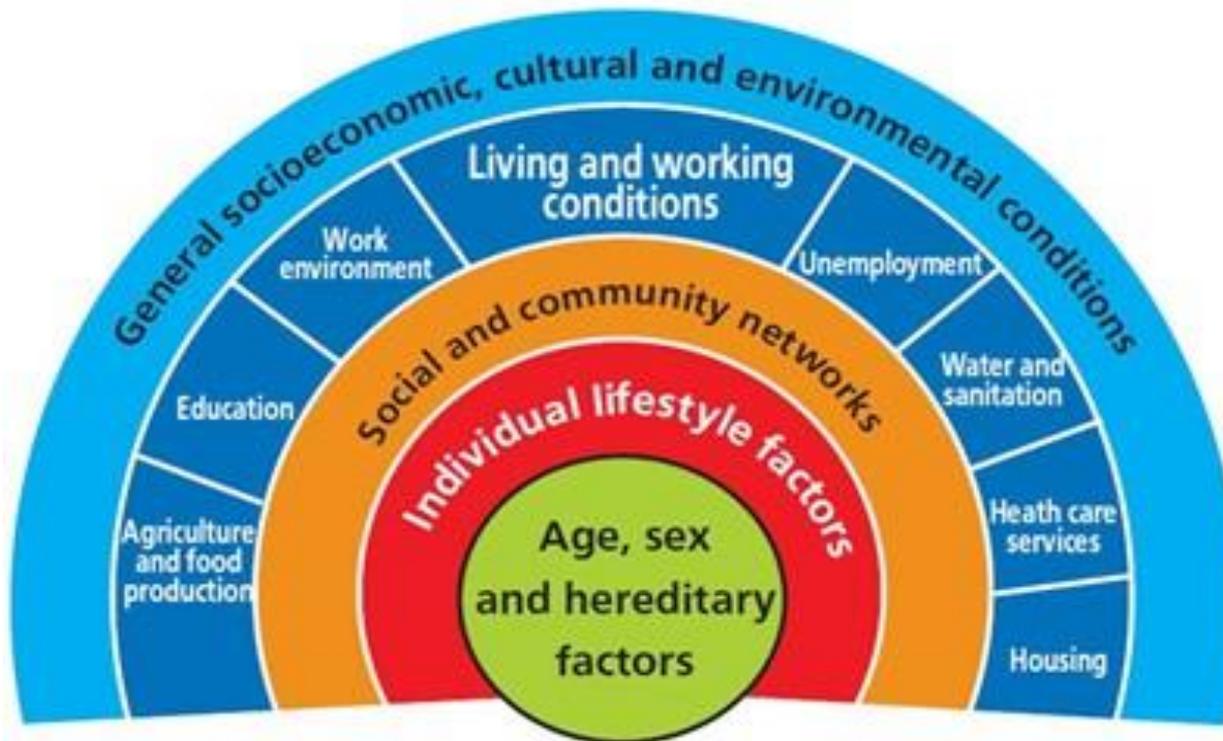
## Defining 'men's health' within the context of the Republic's National Men's Health Policy and the work of MDN

*“any issue that can be seen to **impact on men's quality of life** and for which there is a need for **at both an individual and gender-competent responses** to enable men to **achieve optimal health** and well-being at **population level**”.*





# Social Determinants of Health



The Determinants of Health (1992) Dahlgren and Whitehead



# From **CREATIVE VISION** to **REALITY** 1990

Believing in dreams .... *and hard work*





# Creating Welcoming Safe Spaces for Men Supporting Men to Live Flourishing Healthy Lives





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**The Stories *We are Told* &  
*Tell Ourselves* that may  
Impact Our Wellbeing....**





# How such messages can impact on our ability to care for our health....

- *Won't realise when your under stress*
- *Won't feel Health Services are for us*
- *Won't go to GP early (Prostate)*
- *Find it hard to seek help*
- *Find it difficult to share*
- *May not have developed expressive feeling language*
- *Will keep many acquaintances but few friends*
- *Prone to becoming isolated*
- *May develop or use unhelpful coping mechanisms (alcohol, drugs etc)*



# MEN EMOTIONS & FEELINGS?

- ▶ WE often speak of **Emotions** or **Feelings** as if it refers to or means being **WEAK...**
- ▶ In actual **FACT** they are the reason **WE** are at the **top of the species pile.....**
- ▶ They tell us important things about our **LIVES & HEALTH**

EG / Knowing, Feeling & Expressing

**OUR POSITIVE PASSIONS**





# Stress: Physical / Emotional

- ▶ Muscle tension
- ▶ Pounding heart
- ▶ Fast swallowing
- ▶ Sweating
- ▶ Change of appetite
- ▶ Sleep problems
- ▶ Headaches
- ▶ Jumpiness
- ▶ indigestion

**Physical**

- ▶ Under Pressure
- ▶ Tense/unrelaxed
- ▶ Feeling conflicted
- ▶ Unable to concentrate
- ▶ Fear of social failure
- ▶ Restlessness
- ▶ Mentally drained
- ▶ Can't make decisions
- ▶ Feeling no pleasure or enjoyment in anything

**Emotional**



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**GOOD things to  
know for**

**OUR**

**Health & Wellbeing**



# Wellbeing Tips for Men

## 1 Realise: Its ok not to feel ok

- We need to support each other to learn the language of emotional literacy
- Allow yourself the **permission to process the harder stuff** and draw upon the well of sensitivity as part of the healing process.
- **Try to allow ourselves to express vulnerability - -- to access softer emotions—share fears, worries, ask for help---we can do this... through support, sense of belonging.**



## No. 2 Ask for Support

- Men are **less likely to report concerns** re mental or emotional problems. Feel that **revealing personal difficulties is tantamount** to an admission of failure of their masculinity.
- **Talking gives you control and releases the pressure** and indirectly improves your self-esteem and resilience.



# No. 3 Accept Yourself

**Avoid comparing** yourself to some ideal notion of the perfect male. We all have a mix of strengths and weaknesses and that's part of the make-up of all men.

**Accepting yourself for who you are... Learn to listen to our lives and connect how we feel**

*Become more at home in ourselves and our bodies..*

**Acceptance- Self Esteem/Self Belief— Your Power and ability to make some changes**

A quote by Denis Waitley is displayed over a background image of a sunset over a mountain range. The quote is: "Accept yourself as you are right now; an imperfect, changing, growing and worthy person."

Accept yourself as you are right now; an imperfect, changing, growing and worthy person.

Denis Waitley

## No. 4 Connect Virtually with Others



- Fewer social points of contact, rural communities are changing, affect their sense of place.
- *Find your tribe, group, companions that support better healthier ways of living in the world*
- Keeping in **regular contact** with family and **supportive friends--** can help you deal with the stresses of life, make you feel included and cared for.
- These are the **cornerstones** of your life and invest time in developing them.
- *Think, plan and act more in cooperation with others rather than competitively*



# MEN'S HEALTH WEEK

Monday 11th - Sunday 17th June 2018

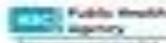
ONE SMALL STEP FOR MAN  
ONE GIANT LEAP FOR MEN'S HEALTH

*What's your small step going to be?*



Visit [www.mhfw.org](http://www.mhfw.org) to find out more

#MenofHealthWeek



# Partnership *versus* Isolation

ONE SMALL STEP

Neil's SUPPORT TO TAKE  
THE STEP





## No. 5 Get Involved - Volunteer

- **Volunteering** in a local community project or joining a local **Men's Shed** can be of significant benefit to a man's health. (Loads of People/Men Volunteered in the last lockdown)
- New research - Men's Shed initiative—10,000 men-- significantly positive benefits --**sense of self-worth and self-esteem**
- They are the catalyst for forming **strong social connections** and bonds—*Develop conversations with other men based on trust and appropriate, incremental sharing.*
- Place where Men can meet socially and regularly in a community space interests of men---Practical + Productive projects, initiatives;

# No. 6 Regular Appropriate Exercise (FATIGUE)

**Regular exercise/** activity can really give your health a boost.

Find something active you enjoy - sport, swimming, walking or cycling - and decide when you are going to do it.

How does Physical Activity reduce cancer risk?

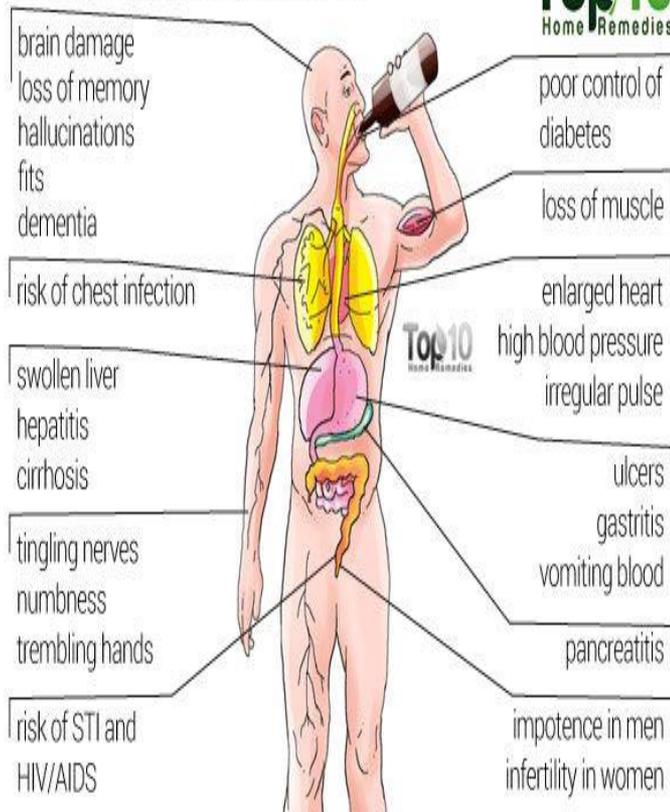
1. Making **immune system** stronger
2. **Shortening time it takes food** to move through intestines - Bowel
3. Altering **body composition** - Reduce body fat
4. Changing **hormone levels**



# No. 8 Try to avoid excessive alcohol

- Men can often drink alcohol to change their mood Research shows a high proportion of men drink more than the recommended maximum
- Sometimes we drink to deal with fear or loneliness, but the effect is only temporary. When the drink wears off, you feel worse because of the way alcohol withdrawal symptoms affect your brain and the rest of your body
- Build a dependency.....Impact on others...partners, children, friends, co-workers

## Alcohol can affect your health



# No. 9 Get lots of Sleep

- Sleep is a crucial part of our busy daily lives.
- It helps restore energy, keeps memory functioning properly, and helps to heal our bodies.
- When sleep is disrupted or deprived--- we don't feel as alert, we feel agitated, and all of our actions seem slow.
- Try to set a good routine to get the best quality sleep. Bed at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning.
- Seven to eight hours is generally recommended.
- Avoid using mobile phones or computer screens before bedtime.



# No. 10 Self Compassion

- Finding a **good work-life balance** means having things to do which occupy your mind, **leisure time** and gets you involved with other people.
- Give yourself some **'me time'**. **Taking a break** may mean being active, not doing very much at all, just putting your feet up!
- **Take Notice - *Get in touch with nature.***--Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on your experiences show...**gratitude.**  
**Savour the moment**





# SPIRITUALITY FROM HSE National Office Health Directorate Health Service Executive

1. Our spirituality embraces our ideas about who we are and what our purpose is in life.
2. People of all ages have a spiritual dimension in their lives, whether this is within an organised religion, within another type of group or as an individual.
3. *Secular spiritual activities* are increasingly available and popular too.
4. *This spiritual dimension in our lives has an important influence on our mental health. Spirituality is a deeply personal matter.*

## What do I mean by Positive Spirituality?

- A. Positive Spirituality helps us to find *your voice* for wellness and living a flourishing life - *quietly...*
- B. Points us towards wellbeing, heartfelt connection and community
- C. It invites us to discover our gifts and talents and encourages us to use the deliberately incrementally to make a difference

*Discover what works best for you.*

# No. 11 Do Things YOU Like doing

- Reflect and acknowledge the things we love doing and do it...  
Feel better
- The more we bring into our lives our passions and gifts and practice both the better for our Health & Wellbeing
- Try something new. **Rediscover an old interest.** Sign up for that course. Take on a different responsibility at work. Learn to play an instrument or how to cook your favourite food.
- Set a challenge you will enjoy achieving. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being fun.





# No 12. Intimacy & Closeness Connection & Cooperation



- Both men and women can continue -as they grow older to deepen their intimacy in every area of their lives.
- Men who find themselves struggling in this area it's important it is to retain the intimacy in their relationship.....
- *acknowledge your feelings..*



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*Finally A Word on  
Sustaining  
Ourselves through  
CONNECTION*



# Story of Geese



- ▶ *Fly in Formation*
- ▶ *Honk from the back*
- ▶ *Support each other*
- ▶ *Fly much further together (72 percent)*
- ▶ *Move from front to back*
- ▶ **SYNERGY**
- ▶ *Fly down to mind a sick goose*



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# Finding Our Tribe / Supporting EACH OTHER STRENGTH IN PARTNERSHIP



Paul Gilligan St Patrick's Mental Health services

## ***Post COVID Opening Up***

### **3 things to keep in mind**

- ▶ Believe that we are loved, that we are good people and that we have the ability to be happy- *We all have a deep seated resilience, connecting with that is all important*
- ▶ *Trust others, express how we feel, listen and communicate with other people you trust.*
- ▶ *Embrace uncertainty, Need time with our losses and uncertainties and its vital we share our stories and take space and time to process what has happened*



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# Contact Information

**The Men's Development Network**

**Men's Development Health Programme**

**For Range Of Services: phone *051 844 260/1***

**Website [www.mensnetwork.ie](http://www.mensnetwork.ie)**

**Email: [health@mensnetwork.ie](mailto:health@mensnetwork.ie)**

Any Burning Questions??





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