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Issue
Two

An insight into the implementation of Connecting for Life Cork

Welcome note

This is our second Connecting for Life Cork newsletter and its purpose is to keep you updated on the implementation of Connecting for Life Cork, the suicide and self-harm reduction plan for the city and county.

The plan was published last year after comprehensive community consultation across the county. Workstream groups have been established to deliver on key targets for 2018 and beyond.

Some local developments of note in recent months include:

The PSYCHED Workplace Wellbeing awards, you can see more details on their new YouTube video at :
<https://youtu.be/mXzAyaUeZyE>

The Social and Education Project (SHEP) is running 20-hour short courses in the Cork area this autumn, most of which are organised collaboratively with the Lantern Community Project in Cork City. See www.socialandhealth.com or contact Liam.mccarthy@socialandhealth.com

A new Wellbeing Network for West Cork was launched in Drimoleague in October, contact Kathleen.harrington@nln.ie for more details.

The Suicide and Self-Harm Observatory



An update on the Suicide and Self-Harm Observatory from **Professor Ella Arensman and Ruth Benson** of the National Suicide Research Foundation, School of Public Health, University College Cork:

The Suicide and Self-Harm Observatory (SSHO) has been developed by the National Suicide Research Foundation (NSRF) and School of Public Health, University College Cork (UCC), and is funded by the Health Research Board, Ireland. The Observatory builds on the Suicide Support and Information System and is an innovative real-time surveillance system and is the first system of its kind in Europe. It collates minimal data relating to suspected suicide cases within Cork City and County on a fortnightly basis.

The SSHO will improve early identification of emerging suicide and self-harm clusters, accessing multiple sources of information using advanced techniques. The need for up to date information on suicide and self-harm cases has been underlined by an increasing development of misinformation disseminated in the media, reported by international research to cause harmful effects. The Observatory is currently being implemented in collaboration with the Coroners of Cork City and County, and representatives of regional health and community services, before wider implementation.

The establishment of the SSHO is in accordance with *Connecting for Life*. Ireland's National Strategy to Reduce Suicide (2015-2020), In particular, Goal 7 of the strategy focuses on the *Improvement of surveillance, evaluation and high quality research relating to suicidal behaviour* with a key objective emphasising *Improved access to timely and high quality suicide and self-harm data*.

Having access to a real-time surveillance system, which can be measured against CSO statistics, will assist in early identification of emerging suicide and self-harm clusters, a timely response to people affected by suicide and self-harm, and verification of public statements on suicide and self-harm that are increasingly being disseminated via media outlets, including social media.

Please contact ruth.benson@ucc.ie with any queries or for more information.

www.connectingforlifecork.ie
www.yourmentalhealth.ie



Highlights from the work streams and actions:

- During Vitality Cobh, 32 services participated in a co-ordinated initiative during this annual festival using the **Little Things campaign**, matching the message that best relates to something about the service. More than 1800 people passed through the park in Cobh for the event.
- Community Health Workers are incorporating the **Little Things campaign** into ongoing project work in Mallow Community Health Project, Fermoy Community Health Project and Youghal Community Health Project.
- **Training:** Training is continuing across the region for ASIST and safeTALK. All requests for training should be made to : SP.enquiries@hse.ie
- More than 10,000 **Green Ribbons** were distributed across Cork city and county during Green Ribbon Month.

Events to mark World Suicide Prevention Day in Cork – Working Together to Prevent Suicide

Evening of Hope

An “Evening of Hope and Healing” took place outside Hollyhill Library on World Suicide Prevention Day, featuring The High Hopes Choir, Shine a Light, HSE Suicide Resource Officers, local youth services and youth groups. The focus of the evening was ‘Hope and Healing in the community’ and it was very uplifting and powerful. This was Shine A Light’s way of bring services who support together with the community to mark an important day for the community as a whole. services within the community and with individuals and families who have lost people to suicide. The focus was to create a supportive space for people.

Lighting The Way

Lighting The Way Art Exhibit and Support Information.



An exhibition of artwork created through the Lighting the Way processes across Cork City and County was set up in Libraries across five areas including Fermoy, Blackpool, Tory Top Rd, Clonakilty and Cobh. The exhibition displayed information about the Lighting the Way project, its art and also a variety of mental health supports across a range of areas. This project was supported by Cork Kerry Community Healthcare staff in Community Work, local community groups/individuals in some areas and the Suicide Resource Office, along with the City and County Library Services. Meanwhile, the Shine a Light Suicide and Mental Health Awareness also supported performances of “Bring him back alive on October 10th and 11th, to mark World Mental Health Day. Contact joanne.mcnamara3@hse.ie for more information.

Media Guidelines

The National Suicide Research Foundation hosted a lunch time seminar on ‘The Role of the Media in Suicide Prevention, Suicide Clustering and Contagion’ in conjunction with the School of Public Health, University College Cork.

At the seminar, which took place on September 26th, Professor Ella Arensman, Dr Paul Corcoran and Mr Niall McTernan presented their research followed by an informative and engaging discussion with panelists from local media, the CKCH Communications Team and stakeholders involved in suicide prevention at community and national level.

The seminar highlighted both the positive and negative impact the media can have on suicidal behaviour and illustrated how important it is to ‘work together (with the media) to prevent suicide’, the theme of World Suicide Prevention Day 2018.



Marking World Mental Health Day in Cork



Speaking out to improve men's mental health and wellbeing – Olympian Rob Heffernan addresses seminar in Cork.

Olympic race-walker Rob Heffernan addressed a seminar on men's mental health and wellbeing in Cork as part of events which marked World Mental Health Day.

The Toghher man was among an impressive line-up of speakers at the event at County Hall, organised by Cork Kerry Community Healthcare Mental Health Services, and partners. The Connecting for Life event was sponsored by Head of Mental Health Services Cork Kerry Community Healthcare, Sinead Glennon.

Keynote speaker Rob Heffernan spoke on ways of promoting a healthy lifestyle, and dealing with setbacks. The seminar also heard from Noel Dunne of Men's Sheds, and Daniel Flynn, Principal Psychology Manger, Mental Health Services, Cork Kerry Community Health care who spoke on the health concerns for men.

Sinead Glennon, Head of Mental Health Services, thanked the attendees and especially the many agencies and voluntary groups involved in the seminar

"Connecting for Life, Cork's suicide and self-harm reduction plan is a cross-community plan. Bringing groups together for an event like this shows that an inter-agency approach can and does work. This year we have chosen to have a particular focus on Mens' Health, in acknowledgement that suicide rates are higher in men, and that men can be slower to seek help.

The main message we wish to get across is that help is available, and there is a variety of means in which to access it," Ms Glennon said.

Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention Martin Ryan explained that the event was aimed at men as the mental health and wellbeing of men has been highlighted by many experts as a matter for concern. Pointing to a study earlier this year which found that in the last 10 years, the suicide rate among middle-aged men (40-59) was the highest of all age bands.

"In my role as Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention, I'm very aware that the messages and talks I give to the general public can show that we men can express ourselves in a safe way. My work brings me to football grounds, country marts and many other places

where we hope a message of hope can be promoted."

"The Men's Shed movement underpins the idea that men talk 'shoulder to shoulder' in other words, when they are engaged in an activity. We need to support and encourage men to seek help when it is needed," Martin Ryan said.

As well as a line-up of speakers, support services were introduced to 80-plus attendees. The Samaritans, Pieta House, the Cork Social and Health Education Project and Coisceim Counselling Services all had representatives present. Partners in the event were Cork City Social Inclusion, the Cork County Council Wellbeing Office, Healthy Ireland and Healthy Cities.

Other World Mental Health Day events in Cork included:

- A Schools Wellbeing event in City Hall.
- Cork Samaritans held an open morning in their refurbished Coach Street Offices.
- Cork Jigsaw held an open evening at its offices.

The wide-ranging consultation process that took place as part of Connecting for Life Cork pointed to the need to raise awareness of supports and services available. In response, this poster was designed to get the message out that 'help is a phone call away'. Contact Martin Ryan, martin.ryan8@hse.ie or Helena Cogan, helena.cogan@hse.ie, if you would like copies.

Need to talk?



Help is a phone call away



Free-phone 24/7 on **116 123**

Text **087 2609090** Email: jo@samaritans.org



Call **1800 247 247** Email: info@pieta.ie



Free-phone 24/7 **1800 666 666**

Text "Talk" to **50101** Go to www.childline.ie

If you are in crisis please contact your local GP.

Out of hours, contact SouthDoc on **1850 335 999**

or your nearest Emergency Department.