



NEWSLETTER

February 2024 Issue

Welcome to the February 2024 issue of *The Link*, our newsletter for all things related to *Connecting for Life* in Community Healthcare East. Since the launch of our first *Connecting for Life* Action Plan in March 2017, the *Connecting for Life* community have worked tirelessly to improve people's understanding of suicidal behaviour and increase their capacity to respond to suicides, to fight against mental health stigma, to reduce access to lethal means and to identify pathways to care and improve access to services.

This newsletter is a snapshot of some of the work that has been achieved in the area of suicide and self-harm prevention over the last 12 months. As you can see, a lot of amazing work has been done throughout our community. It highlights the people involved in implementing the strategy, their passion, their commitment and the real benefits of their work. This newsletter is to help their stories to be heard. A sincere thank you to all of you who have sent in articles and pictures and have contributed to this edition. We hope you enjoy the read!

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The Talking Therapies Service

by Deirdre McNally

The Talking Therapies Service was established in Clonskeagh Hospital in April 2022, with the aim of increasing access to psychological therapies for people attending community based Adult Mental Health services in Dublin South East. Evidence shows that psychological therapies can be very effective in helping people to understand and deal with emotional and psychological difficulties.

Within the Mental Health Service, psychological therapies generally are provided by psychologists, family therapists, CBT therapists and others who work on multidisciplinary adult mental health teams. They receive referrals from their colleagues on the team, who would have discussed the referral with the client and with the wider mental health team.

The Talking Therapy service works alongside the adult mental health teams in Dublin SouthEast. The service aims to increase access to psychological therapies by offering individual therapy sessions to clients and, where appropriate, to members of their families. The Talking Therapies service also runs various psychotherapy group programmes and provides some staff interventions and support.

If you think you might benefit from psychological therapy, either within the Mental Health Team you attend or with the Talking Therapies Service, you can speak with the clinicians on your team. They will discuss the options available to you.

New LGBTQI+ Group Initiative

by John McMahon

The HSE's National Counselling Service (CH06) and Social Inclusion Psychology are collaborating to develop a new HSE initiative - a pilot psychoeducational group therapy for LGBTQI+ people who have experienced childhood homophobia/transphobia/harassment/stigma due to their LGBTQI+ status.

This will be a 10 week group initiative that will be run one evening a week around March/April 2024. Dates and times to follow.

The criteria for this group are:

- That participants identify as LGBTQI+
- Have experienced childhood homophobia / transphobia / harassment / stigma due to their LGBTQI+ status
- Live within the CH06 catchment area.



If you are working with patients who may be interested in this new initiative, or you have any questions please contact:

Dr. John McMahon, Counsellor Therapist with the National Counselling Service CH East at 087 720 3549 or john.mcmahon4@hse.ie or

Dr. Niamh Marrinan, Principal Specialist Clinical Psychologist Psychosocial Lead, Social Inclusion Office at 087 662 9033 or niamh.marrinan@hse.ie



Recovery in Colour

by Cathy Doyle

Recovery in Colour is a creativity and mental health Recovery Education course co-produced by HSE Community Healthcare East and Advancing Recovery in Community Healthcare East Services (ARCHES) Recovery College, and delivered in Clonskeagh Hospital, Bray Primary Care Centre and the new Recovery Village Wicklow. The course supports people to use 'art journaling' (creating a personal visual journal, painting, drawing, colour and collage), to explore the meaning of mental health recovery, self-care and to help articulate future plans and ambitions.

The co-production of the course was led by Recovery Education Facilitator Cathy Doyle who developed the idea for *Recovery in Colour* from her own mental health lived experience. Co-production is about the inclusion of people with lived experience of mental illness, as well as their partners, family and friends (who are all "Experts by Experience") in the commissioning, planning and delivery of services as equal partners with service providers and professionals. Having recognised the value of creativity in her own recovery journey, Cathy created a Recovery Education course to help others.

Feedback from ARCHES Recovery College students who have participated in the course suggests that *Recovery in Colour* helps people in their own recovery journey by creating a safe space to discuss and make sense of psychological distress, providing an atmosphere of encouragement and respect and making people feel at home and valued.

Originally started in HSE Community Healthcare East in 2019, *Recovery in Colour* is the most popular course on offer in the ARCHES Recovery College and consistently gets positive feedback from participants telling us how much they valued the course as part of their recovery journey. The artwork created by course participants is proudly displayed on the walls of ARCHES Recovery College building and in the quarterly CHEER newsletter.

To find out more about *Recovery in Colour*, email info@archesrecovery.ie or call 087 342 9922.

LEARN
MORE



Recovery Village Newcastle

by Ellen Conalty

We are delighted to announce that the new Recovery Village has opened to the left of Newcastle Hospital, Killadreenan, Newtown Mount Kennedy, Co. Wicklow. This new service will offer a combination of activities developed in collaboration between the HSE, Mental Health Ireland, ARCHES Recovery College and other community groups.

Current activities include the **Connections Café** on Mondays and Thursdays at 2pm, the **Walk in Nature** group on alternating Mondays and Thursdays, and **Discussions on Wellness** with John on Tuesdays. Helen's **Art Class** is on Thursdays at 2pm.

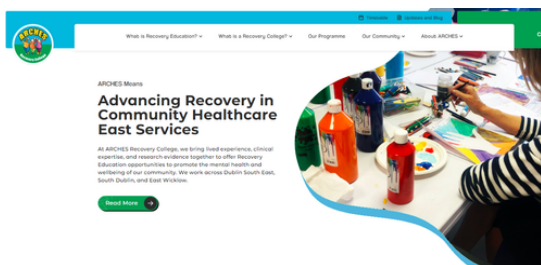
2024 will also include a new monthly family support group, **Encircles**, beginners and medium/advanced level **Yoga** classes, and the **Blossom and Bloom** gardening club. Further plans include **Mosaics** with Mark, **Pilates**, **Sounding Well** with Diana and **Mindful Movement** with Gina.



“

Please email Ellen at RecoveryVillage.Wicklow@hse.ie or ring 087 2531445 for more information on activities and to register your interest.

”



Find out more about ARCHES Recovery College on their new website at <https://archesrecovery.ie/>

Leading up to Christmas, ARCHES Recovery College facilitated their first Recovery Education course in the Recovery Village, **Understanding Anxiety**. Facilitated by Cathy and Isabelle it has had full attendance and super feedback. January saw the delivery of the **Boosting Resilience** course, and **Your Personal Recovery Narrative** was offered in February.

ARCHES courses are open to people in the Dublin South East, Cluain Mhuire, or East Wicklow catchment, who self-identify as having their own experience of mental health difficulties, or are a member of a family impacted by poor mental health, and to mental health professionals. To register, simply email Matthew at info@archesrecovery.ie or call 087 342 9922.

Menopause and Mental Health

by Jim Gorman

The topic of menopause in the workplace has become critically important to people around Ireland. The term menopause is a catch all phrase which includes, perimenopause, post-menopause, early menopause, premature menopause, and surgical menopause. We know that well over half a million women are menopausal and 350,000k are currently in the workplace. Menopausal women are wives, partners, mothers, sisters, relatives, friends, colleagues, peers, and so on.

With this in mind, on May 15th 2023 Health and Wellbeing CH East hosted a webinar for staff around menopause. The webinar was presented by menopause expert Loretta Dignam. The aim of this general menopause awareness webinar was to begin to raise awareness of the topic, and to break down the taboos that menopause can bring about. The goal for Health and Wellbeing CH East is to create a supportive environment for women experiencing menopause. The webinar was participatory and interactive with staff members registering in advance and able to submit questions for Loretta to answer. This introductory webinar covered a massive amount of information for staff. Loretta shared tips and resources for navigating this challenging and transitional stage of life. Including what to expect, symptoms and what you can do. Loretta also addressed the myths and taboos around menopause and finally gave tips for managing menopause.



Following on from this successful introductory menopause webinar CH East hosted another webinar on Monday October 16th. This time the webinar focused specifically on menopause and our mental health.

Both webinars can be found on the [Community Healthcare East YouTube page](#) and are accessible for everyone.



Watch both videos here:

<https://www.youtube.com/@HSECommunityHealthcareEast/playlists>

STAG Wagon Project

by Helena O'Brien, Andrea Koenigstorfer, Peter O'Reilly

The STAG Wagon Project was initiated and led by two Traveller men who wanted to pass on the tradition of wagon building to the younger generation. The aim of the project was to promote positive mental health among Traveller men and young Travellers, through culturally appropriate means (wagon building) as well as signposting them towards available services. The hope was to attract Traveller men to come together with a common interest and to create a Men's Shed group, where they could engage in displaying and sharing their skillsets, as well as gain all the health benefits of establishing a Men's Shed. The aim was also to build resilience among young people, strengthening cultural identity, and building trust in services.



The project was a co-production between Southside Travellers Action Group (STAG), STAG Men's Shed, The Hazel House Café and Woodwork School in Tibbradden, HSE Mental Health Service Co-ordinator for Travellers, Resource Officer for Suicide Prevention (ROSP), Area Lead for Mental Health Engagement, Health and Wellbeing, DLR Children and Young People Services Committee (CYPSC), Healthy Ireland, Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT) and Age-Friendly Programme Manager & Social Inclusion Officer, dlr County Council.

From conversations to consultations, the project team co-created a culturally specific mental health initiative, driven by people's passion and belief in each other. This initiative was an opportunity to awaken the spirit and enthusiasm of Travellers in the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown area. It enabled the community to take pride in their heritage and culture and to create something they could be proud of. Participants from the Men's Shed said that they were creating a living museum for people to experience the essence of Traveller heritage. The Wagon Project has demonstrated that initiatives like these provide supports and pathways for improved mental health among communities.



The initiative's success is down to the commitment and dedication of all who believed in it and all who donated their time, energy, wisdom, and dedication to its vision.

You can find a copy of the **The Wagon Project: An Initiative of Southside Travellers Action Group** report [here](#). Join us for the **launch of the Documentary video** in The Studio, Lexicon Library, Dun Laoghaire, on **Monday 4th March at 2 pm**.

Join us for the Launch of
The Wagon Project Documentary
Monday the 4th of March 2024, 2pm
The Studio, Lexicon Library, Queen's Road, Dún Laoghaire, Dublin
Join us for some tea, coffee, cake and a beautiful documentary by IADT Students, Aaron Hallows, Daragh O' Shea and Orla Engstfeld.

Logos at the bottom include: Southside Travellers, Green Dún Laoghaire, HSE, CYPSC, hti, CHIE Inclusion, and PATH.

Lunchtime Discussion Series

by Co. Wicklow Traveller Mental Health Steering Group

The Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention have been supporting the Co Wicklow Traveller Mental Health Steering Group to run the “Lunchtime Discussion Series”, a number of discussions on issues that impact Traveller mental health. The County Wicklow Mental Health Steering Group was established early in 2019 with the aim of:

- Raising awareness in the community around Mental Health
- Connecting Travellers with appropriate services
- Progressing the recommendations from the Wicklow Traveller Mental Health Report, a report carried out by the Co. Wicklow Community Health Workers
- Identifying gaps and barriers to accessing services

The “Lunchtime Discussion Series” is one of the ways the steering group are looking to progress the recommendations from the Co Wicklow Traveller Mental Health Report 2019.

The aim is to create a space to share stories and experience and to build relationships between services and the community. This is to be done in an informal setting with short presentations followed by a discussion and lunch.

There have been four events so far, with information and discussions on:

- Internalized Shame and Oppression
- Dual Diagnosis
- Racism and Discrimination
- Inter-family Conflict



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Email Christy Moorehouse at
daishproject.manager@outlook.com
to get on the mailing list.

World Mental Health Day in CORE

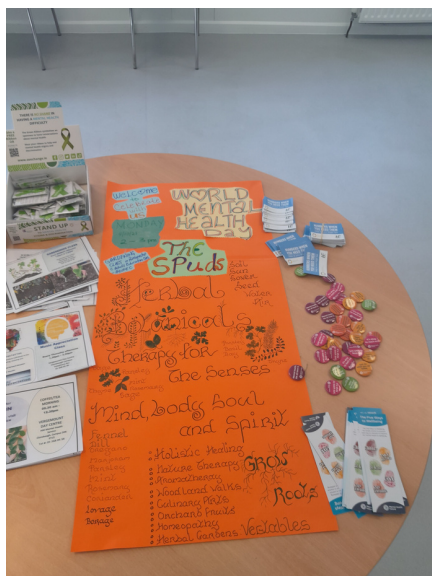
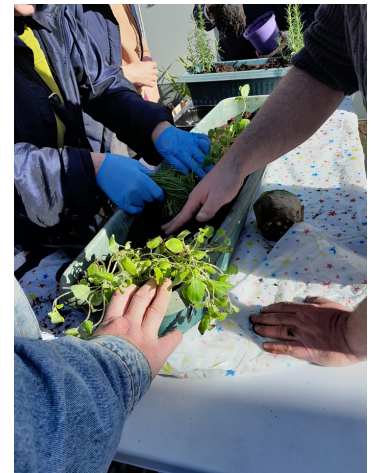
by Joy Paglinawan

The CORE* service users in Clonskeagh recently received funding for new planters through REACH funding and were delighted to use these for the activities in their horticulture group. Under the guidance of Dublin City ETB, they planted a variety of herbs over the summer months.

They then had the idea to use the theme “Connecting with herbs” for their World Mental Health Day event in October. In the weeks coming up to the event, they carefully harvested these herbs, dried them and stored them in containers.

On World Mental Health Day, attendees of the event were encouraged to connect with specific herbs via a sensory activity. They were also invited to create their own foot bath salts and/or herbal bag.

* formerly Vergemount Day Centre



HUGG

by Marie McKeon

HUGG provide 3 suicide bereavement peer support groups in Dublin (Tallaght, Leopardstown and Smithfield) and 1 in Wicklow. All HUGG groups are led by trained volunteers, with lived experience of suicide loss. We are delighted to announce 6 NEW local volunteers have joined our team to support co-facilitating these groups.

Michelle Hegarty, HUGG Leopardstown Facilitator, aims to complete the Dublin Marathon for HUGG in memory of her sister Maria. Michelle is using her idonate page to raise awareness about HUGG and to encourage others to reach out for support.



A member of the HUGG team, Marie McKeon attended the South Dublin Bereavement Network event “Living with Loss” held in Tallaght, Sept 21st. Marie sat on the panel and shared her lived experience of suicide loss through the eyes of a young person and its long lasting impact. Through this on the ground awareness raising activity we hope to continue to see more people in the region reaching out for support and a continued interest in volunteering with HUGG.

Aware Support and Education Services

by Jamie Good

Aware's Support Services

If you're experiencing depression, bipolar disorder or anxiety, or are concerned about a loved one, Aware can offer you a safe and accepting space to receive support, compassion and guidance. All three of Aware's support services are offered free of charge. The *Aware Support Line* and *Aware Support Mail* are available seven days a week and *Aware Support & Self Care Groups* take place daily with in-person, Zoom and phone options available.

CONTACT US

Aware Support Line: 1800 80 48 48 (10am-10pm, 365 days)

Aware Support Mail: supportmail@aware.ie

Aware Support & Self Care Groups: www.aware.ie for details

Aware's Education Services

Mental health is something that we all have and something that we need to work at. It enables us to participate fully in life and get the most out of what we do. Aware offers a range of education programmes for adults living with depression, anxiety or bipolar disorder, supporting a loved one, or simply looking to learn more about mental health and how to protect it.

The programmes run in phases each year – January, March and October. There are a limited number of places available for each programme to ensure that everyone can benefit from the sessions. The programmes are delivered in workshop style to offer a participative learning environment and each session is c. 90 minutes long. The workshops provide an opportunity for discussion but at no stage is anyone asked to share information if they do not wish to.

REGISTER NOW

Express interest or register your place at www.aware.ie

**The Aware education programmes are free to attend, with a refundable 30 Euro booking deposit in place to ensure participants that really want to book a place have the opportunity to do so. The booking fee will be refunded by contacting Aware once all modules in the course have been completed. Reduced booking fees are available for students, the unemployed, OAPs or those in possession of a medical card.*



Aware Life Skills Programme

This programme, nine hours over the course of six weeks, will teach attendees how to better cope with the stresses of everyday life, recognise and manage unhelpful thoughts, learn new ways of thinking and ultimately begin the journey to a healthier and more confident life. Developed by the renowned cognitive behaviour therapy specialist (CBT), Dr. Chris Williams, the programme is specifically designed to help people learn more about how we think and how this can influence our actions in helpful or unhelpful ways.

I feel by practicing these tools daily I will be able to get back to the old confident me that seemed to have got lost because of life pressures.

An amazing, potentially life changing course that is user friendly and welcoming. The skills are invaluable.

I thought it was great to be in a room with others in the same boat – very comforting. Sharing experiences and hearing that the way I'm reacting is normal and giving me information how to help.

This course gave me permission to take time to care for myself. We were reminded of the importance of self care so we can care for our loved ones without burn out.

Aware Relatives & Friends Programme

This psycho-educational programme, six hours over the course of four weeks, is designed to equip people with the tools to understand and support a loved one experiencing depression or bipolar disorder, while also focusing on the self-care of the supporter. The content addresses the signs and symptoms of depression and bipolar disorder, offers practical advice on self-care, teaches coping tools, communication skills, and addresses the issues that arise for people who are supporting a loved one.

Aware Living Well With Bipolar Disorder Programme

This programme is designed for people with a diagnosis of bipolar disorder and aims to equip participants with opportunities to understand and effectively manage the condition. It's delivered workshop style in 90 minute sessions each week over eight weeks. Participants are invited to bring a supporter to the 7th session which is a two-hour session. This programme is followed by a dedicated Support & Self Care Group for a period of six weeks to enable participants to reflect on the programme and support each other as they further explore or implement the learnings.

From the very first session I felt supported and understood, all these individuals in the programme were like me looking for some hope, support and information. During that 8-week programme I learnt more than I ever would have expected.

Bipolar can be a very isolating illness and to feel connected to others going through similar experiences makes such a difference.

Breaking Through



Connecting for Life
Dublin South East, Dublin South
and Wicklow

Suicide Prevention Training in Community Healthcare East

by *Breaking Through*

Breaking Through co-ordinate and manage Suicide Intervention & Prevention Skills Training in Dublin South, Dublin South East and Wicklow on behalf of the HSE Mental Health Services as part of Ireland's National Suicide Prevention Strategy, Connecting for Life.

The mission is an Ireland where all individuals, communities and organisations can identify those at risk, respond to individuals in distress and help to reduce the rates of suicide and self-harm.

The training will help you:

- Recognise when someone might be at risk of suicide.
- Build your confidence to talk to them about it.
- Connect them with helpful supports and services.



Training programmes on offer include:



A 90-minute online programme



Suicide Alertness for Everyone, a half day face-to-face workshop programme.



A two day skills building workshop in suicide first aid



A one day workshop which provides opportunities to improve knowledge, awareness and understanding of self-harming behaviour



679 people received training in suicide intervention/prevention in Dublin South, Dublin South East and Wicklow from 1st Jan – 30th November 2023.

- 134 people completed START
- 13 SafeTALK trainings were held where 263 participants completed the training
- 10 ASIST trainings were held where 207 participants completed the training
- 5 Understanding Self Harm trainings were held where 75 participants completed the training

Training surpassed and exceeded my expectations

I found it very informative and a very safe space to learn

Would your organisation like to hold a training?

Organisations in the area that held their own trainings in 2023 included schools, hospitals, GAA clubs, cultural centres and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. If your organisation is interested in holding training please call Breaking Through on 01 6060858 or email admin@breakingthrough.org.

How to book training:

Training is free and for persons over 18. For a list of upcoming trainings and registration please click on this link

<https://bookwhen.com/che>

Absolutely superb, recommend everyone to do this training



National Mental Health Information and Supports

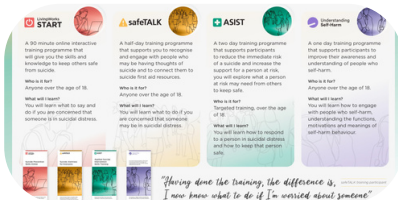
yourmentalhealth.ie/



Connecting for Life
Dublin South East, Dublin South
and Wicklow

More Information on Connecting for Life CH East

<http://www.connectingforlifecho6.ie/>



Suicide Prevention Training in CH East

<https://bookwhen.com/che>



Next Issue of The Link!

If you're interested in making a contribution to our next issue of the link, get in touch with us!

Deadline for submission: 31 July 2024

Contact: adam.byrne@hse.ie -or-
andrea.koenigstorfer@hse.ie