



National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2019-2022

Implementation Review 2020

Background

This first [National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2019-2022](#) was a landmark commitment arising from our [National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026](#).

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in Ireland. With over 13,000 cases diagnosed each year it accounts for over one-third of all cancers diagnosed annually¹.

The number of people being diagnosed with skin cancer in Ireland is rising rapidly. It is generally classified into two groups: melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC). Between 2020 and 2045, it is predicted that the number of cases of melanoma per year among males and females will increase by 67% and NMSC to increase by 110%².

Yet, skin cancer is largely preventable by protecting skin from ultraviolet (UV) radiation. UV is emitted naturally from the sun and also comes from artificial sources such as sunbeds. Following the Healthy Ireland SunSmart code can protect against skin cancer (Figure 1).

National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan Implementation

The aim of the National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2019-2022 is to develop and implement evidence-based strategies which will increase awareness and adoption of skin cancer prevention behaviours through cross-sectoral collaboration.

An overarching cross-sectoral advisory group guides and implements the plan. The plan sets out areas that are distinct yet complementary building blocks to reverse the rising incidence of skin cancer in Ireland. Seven thematic areas are outlined in the plan with specific actions. By employing a combination of targeted strategies including education, media campaigns, environmental measures and policy changes across multiple settings the plan aims to:

- Increase awareness of skin cancer prevention
- Improve adoption of skin cancer preventative behaviours
- Monitor change and evaluate plan effectiveness

¹ National Cancer Registry Ireland (2020) Cancer in Ireland 1994-2018 with estimates for 2018-2020: Annual report of the National Cancer Registry. NCRI, Cork, Ireland.

² National Cancer Registry (2019) Cancer incidence projections for Ireland 2020-2045. National Cancer Registry, Cork

This document provides a review on implementation of each of the thematic area for 2020. Of note, during this year the Covid-19 pandemic impacted upon implementation, despite this implementation was progressed adapting to this new environment.

Protect your skin



Know the UV index: In Ireland, the UV radiation levels are high from April to September, even when it is cloudy. Stay safe by limiting time in the sun when UV is strongest, typically between the hours of 11:00am-3:00pm.



Slip on clothing: Cover skin as much as possible, wear long sleeves, collared t-shirts, clothes made from close-woven material that does not allow sunlight through.



Slop on sunscreen. Use factor 30 for adults and 50 for kids. Apply sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30+ for adults and 50+ for children, with high UVA protection, and water resistant. Reapply regularly. No sunscreen can provide 100% protection, it should be used alongside other protective measures such as clothing and shade.



Slap on a wide brimmed hat: Protect your face, ears and neck.



Seek shade: Especially if outdoors between 11am and 3pm, and always use a sunshade on a child's buggy.



Slide on sunglasses: Guard your eyes from harm by wearing sunglasses with UV protection.



Do not deliberately try to get a suntan. Avoid getting a sunburn. Never use a sunbed.



Figure 1 Healthy Ireland SunSmart Code

National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan Implementation Review 2020

Status	Ref.	Action	Lead	Summary Update
Thematic Area 1: Establish oversight for implementation of skin cancer prevention plan				
Complete	1.1	Establish governance and reporting structure aligned with the National Cancer Strategy	DoH, NCCP	Cross-sectoral advisory group established, governance and terms of reference agreed. Sub-groups for target areas Children & Young People, Outdoor Workers and Awareness Raising established. Building relationships with stakeholders. Successful application for Slaintecare funding for Cancer Prevention Co-ordinator to co-ordinate implementation of plan, recruitment delayed as a result pause on Slaintecare projects due Covid-19 pandemic. Interviews for post complete and post offered to successful candidate. Annual review 2020 complete.
Started	1.2	Assign skin cancer prevention plan coordinator	NCCP	
Complete	1.3	Establish a cross-sectoral advisory group to guide and implement plan	DoH, NCCP	
Started	1.4	Identify and build relationships with stakeholders to implement plan	DoH, NCCP	
Started	1.5	Undertake annual review of implementation of plan	NCCP	
Thematic Area 2: Increase national awareness of skin cancer prevention and improve adoption of skin cancer preventative behaviours				
Complete	2.1	Agree evidence based key messages for skin cancer prevention in Ireland	DoH, NCCP	Evidence based key messages agreed and published. Vitamin D position statement under development. SunSmart branding agreed and published. Pathway for organisations to apply to use SunSmart branding agreed. Social media assets developed for target populations incorporating SunSmart branding and patient stories. Partner packs including resources for general population and target populations shared nationally. Communications plan 2020 delivered. SunSmart education embedded within Healthy Ireland Smart Start programme, National Childhood Network education for staff and Construction Industry Federation CPD. Sun protection education delivered by RTE School@home. UV information included in Met Eireann messaging. Supported SunSmart campaigns by national charitable organisations through evidence review and material promotion.
Started	2.2	Develop skin cancer prevention resources to increase awareness and support behavioural interventions for use by all stakeholders	DoH, NCCP/HSE	
Complete	2.3	Develop an annual communications plan	DoH, NCCP/HSE	
Started	2.4	Integrate skin cancer prevention education into existing educational and training avenues	Implementation group	
Started	2.5	Provide access to support for organisations and communities to implement skin cancer prevention interventions	Implementation group	
Not started	2.6	Explore feasibility of evidence-based fiscal measures in support of skin cancer prevention behaviours	DoH	

Status	Ref.	Action	Lead	Summary Update
Thematic Area 3: Children and Young People				
Complete	3.1	Develop a comprehensive profile of school-children's risk and protective behaviours relating to UV exposure to inform the implementation of the plan	IPH, NUIG	<p>"Children's exposure to ultraviolet radiation - a risk profile for future skin cancers in Ireland" published June 2020. Resources developed and included in Healthy Ireland Smart Start programme, CHO 1 child health strategy, National Childhood Network and available on NCCP website for organisations. Consultation with kids paused due to impact by Covid-19. Linked with DCYA re Quality and Regulatory Framework/s for ELC setting, to discuss SunSmart inclusion when updating. SunSmart text submitted for Public Health Nurses Manual developed by mychild. SunSmart messaging included on mychild website and Nutrition Reference Pack for infants 0-12 months 7th edition. Children's Hospital Group play SunSmart videos on digital screens in hospitals and urgent care centre. Provision of shade included in the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings</p>
Started	3.2	Develop skin protection resources for use by schools, Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Aged Children (SAC) settings	NCCP, Implementation Group	
Started	3.3	Include children and young people in the development of resources and implementation of programmes in which they are key stakeholders	DoH	
Started	3.4	In line with the updating of the Quality and Regulatory Framework/s for ELC settings, include current messages and advice about skin cancer prevention for young children	Tusla/DCYA	
Started	3.5	Communicate up to date messages and advice about skin cancer prevention for young children in Tusla communications with Early Learning and Care Services including periodic newsletters, with a particular focus on how ELC and SAC can incorporate this into their work	Tusla/DCYA	
Started	3.6	Identify opportunities to include messages about skin cancer prevention for babies, children and young people in communications with parents, including through initiatives identified in First 5	DCYA, DoH, HSE	
Started	3.7	Develop resources to increase awareness of UV risk and protection among young children attending ELC settings, in line with the roll-out of Aistear, the National Curriculum for Early Childhood	DES, DCYA	
Complete	3.8	Ensure the provision of shade is included in the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings	DCYA, DoH, HSE	
Started	3.9	Disseminate and promote resources to support the curriculum in relation to skin protection for use in primary and post primary schools, including through the official Scoilnet portal	DES, DCYA	

Status	Ref.	Action	Lead	Summary Update
Thematic Area 4: Outdoor Workers				
Started	4.1	Identify and pursue opportunities to raise awareness of UV risk and protection among outdoor workers through employer bodies and employee groups and fora	Implementation group	Subgroup established. Review of international examples complete. Webinar event with outdoor workers key employers delivered June 2020. Linked with Construction Industry Federation (CIF) for awareness raising comms activity July 2020 and recorded webinar for CIF CPD. SunSmart Pilot with Cork City Council (CCC), included survey of workers, audit and support CCC implementation group. CCC awarded SunSmart workplace by Healthy Ireland. Developing repository of resources including Outdoor Works SunSmart Framework, Audit and Monitoring tool, Survey, Terms of Reference for organisations SunSmart Implementation groups and examples of international tools and resources.
Started	4.2	Develop resources to support employers to adopt policies for UV protection for outdoor workers	Implementation group	
Started	4.3	Incorporate skin cancer prevention messaging and behaviours into healthy workplaces initiatives	DoH	
Thematic Area 5: Outdoor Leisure				
Started	5.1	Promote evidence informed messages for those who participate in, or spectate at, outdoor sport, physical activity or leisure activities through the governing bodies, local sports partnerships and relevant sports	Implementation group, Sport Ireland	Met with Sport Ireland, identified activity postponed due to Covid-19. Developed social media assets. Partner pack with resources disseminated to Sporting Organisations. SunSmart social media videos created in conjunction with GAA, Get Ireland Walking and Sports Federation Ireland.
Started	5.2	Develop resources for use by organisations responsible for outdoor leisure to support adoption of policies for UV protection	Implementation group	
Started	5.3	Work with groups responsible for management of outdoor recreation areas to identify means of maximising UV protection	Implementation group	

Status	Ref.	Action	Lead	Summary Update
Thematic Area 6: Sunbeds and other artificial UV sources				
Not started	6.1	Increase awareness of risk of sunbed use delivering consistent messages in line with Schedule 1 of the Public Health (Sunbeds) (Health Information) Regulations 2015	Implementation Group	Communication's plan delivered 2020 including awareness raising of sunbed risks
Not started	6.2	Monitor and review implementation and enforcement by the HSE Environmental Health Service of the Public Health Sunbeds Legislation.	DoH	
Not started	6.3	Examine the feasibility of eliminating sunbed use	Implementation Group	
Not started	6.4	Identify other emerging artificial sources of UV	Implementation Group	
Thematic Area 7: Monitoring, research and evaluation				
Not started	7.1	Agree outcome measures and develop a monitoring framework	NCCP, DoH	"Children's exposure to ultraviolet radiation - a risk profile for future skin cancers in Ireland" complete, omnibus survey of Irish population conducted and Healthy Ireland survey 2019 included skin protection questions providing baseline behaviour and awareness data. Research on economic cost of skin cancer underway. Annual update 2020 complete and to be used by advisory group to inform 2021 direction.
Started	7.2	Collate and conduct research to monitor changes in skin cancer prevention knowledge, attitudes and behaviours	NCCP, DoH	
Started	7.3	Identify and pursue research needs to support and monitor implementation of plan	NCCP, DoH	
Started	7.4	Produce an annual update on progress	NCCP, DoH	
Not started	7.5	Review plan implementation to inform future direction	NCCP, DoH	

Implementation Group Members

Department of Health (Health and Wellbeing Unit)

Breakthrough Cancer Research

HSE Dermatology Clinical Programme

HSE Communications

HSE Health & Wellbeing

Irish Cancer Society

Irish Dermatology Nurses Association

Irish Skin Foundation

Marie Keating Foundation

National Cancer Control Programme

NCCP Skin Cancer Leads group

National Screening Service

Patient Public Representative (Melanoma Trust)