

National Meals on Wheels Network



Presentation Outline

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- Strategic Plan 2021-2023 and Goals
- Needs Analysis Report
- Recommendations
- Progress to date.
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- Priorities for the Network Development Officer.
- Launch of the Website and Interactive Map
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Network History and Benefits

The National Meals on Wheels Network was established in 2016, under the umbrella of Irish Rural Link.

IRL encourages and supports its various members to form **single issue networks**. New legislation has made it more difficult and costly for groups to set up as networks so by forming a network under the umbrella of IRL, it eliminates these difficulties.

Current National Networks include;

National Meals on Wheels Network and Community Wetlands Forum.

The additional benefits of forming networks are:

1. That we will support experts, who are knowledgeable about their area of interest.
2. It allows the interest groups to participate at the heart of policy making and in that context bring greater integrity to the problems and opportunities that may materialise.
3. The wider membership of IRL is also better informed and because of that is more likely to take into account the issues that affect rural communities.
4. The agreed policy, because it is accepted by the wider rural family is more likely to be successful in terms of its influence.

Strategic Plan 2021- 2023

In 2020, Irish Rural Link were successful in a funding application to Rethink Ireland. Using this funding, a National Meals on Wheels Strategic Plan was developed.

OUR VISION - Our vision is of a fully supported Meals on Wheels system providing community led services dedicated to meeting the nutritional and social needs of older and vulnerable people to enable them live independently.

Mission Statement – The National Meals on Wheels Network as the leading organisation will provide funding opportunities, training, peer mentoring, research and advocacy support to empower local providers so they will provide nutritious meals, friendly visits, and safety checks that enable older and vulnerable people to live nourished lives with independence and dignity on an equitable basis all over Ireland.

Our Objectives

- Increasing provision in under-served areas to ensure equality of access
- Decreasing the costs of MoW operations and improving the funding structures
- Increasing sustainability of business models to ensure continuity and growth of service



GOALS FOR A THREE YEAR HORIZON

Goal 1 Focus on the individual service providers and their clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase support to our individual service providers and create a network of organisations with supports tailored to their needs and the needs of their clients.
Goal 2 Focus on the nationwide system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify gaps in the system and the business models and service providers that can fill those gaps through expansion / collaborations / additional providers• Build the audience for the service through marketing and local networking
Goal 3 Focus on the financial support required based on the value delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate the value of MoW to its funders and wider society and lobby successfully for a firmer financial footing and embedding in social care systems



Needs Analysis Report

- This Needs Analysis was carried out by Niamh Nolan on behalf of the National Meals on Wheels Network and commissioned by the HSE.
- It set out to investigate the essential role Meals on Wheels service providers play in the lives of vulnerable people and if providers have the capacity to deal with Ireland's rapidly ageing population.
- Both qualitative and quantitative data was gathered as part of this needs analysis. This data was also used for the establishment of the Meals on Wheels interactive map.
- The results of the consultation process indicate commonalities between providers and how a resourced meal on wheels network can identify appropriate solutions and networking opportunities for its members.
- Recommendations have been identified to improve the sustainability of service providers and ensure they are in a position to meet the future demands of their clients.



Recommendations

Networking - Meals on Wheels service providers are in need of a network to enhance the delivery of their services, Effective networking would allow the sector to become innovative.

Volunteerism- The National Meals on Wheels Network will continue its work with Volunteer Ireland to identify new volunteers to the sector.

Funding- Meals on Wheels need to be core funded with multi-annual budgets through ELS funding in order for organisations to better plan and budget for the service they provide in the short to medium term.

Advocacy- Better engagement is required by Policy Makers and the HSE in order to enhance the delivery of this service. The National Meals on Wheels Network is ideally placed to create the linkages between its members, government, and their agencies.

Training- Meals on Wheels service providers need adequate support and training for their social enterprises regarding media resources and strategic planning for their organisation in order to meet the current and future demands of the local communities.

Collective Bargaining- The National Meals on Wheels Network could offer support and cohesion for organisations by reducing the cost of food and buying in bulk. This would influence social enterprises and alleviate the extra costs of buying in portions.



Progress to Date

- Website- IRL has worked with Econceptz to produce a new National Meals on Wheels Network website. Funded through Rethink Ireland. We welcome any input/stories/information/testimonials for inclusion on the website and also our social media pages.
- Interactive Map/ Database- This is the first time meals on wheels has been mapped in Ireland. The interactive map and database contains 260 providers nationally and was launched in September 2021
- Needs Analysis Completed
- Strategic Plan 2021- 2023 Completed
- Began regular meetings with the HSE on Needs Analysis- HSE have appointed Samantha Rayner as the person responsible for meals on wheels.
- Developed National Meals on Wheels Network promotion material including a new logo
- Produced and submitted the Network's budget submission



- Irish Rural Link worked with Consultants 360 and Distillers to source free hand sanitizer and PPE to providers throughout the Pandemic.
- Over 100,000 euro was delivered to providers in all counties through the Small Grants Scheme.
- Irish Rural Link and the National Meals on Wheels Network assisted with groups throughout the country in delivering an extra 400 meals over the Christmas period 2021.
- IRL and MoW would like to acknowledge and thank the work of all those involved in this venture.



Report on Small Grants Scheme

MOW Network through IRL has partnered with Community Foundation of Ireland to set up a small grants scheme. Over two years, 100,000 euro has been distributed to members across the country.

In 2020, IRL provided small grants of 2,000 Euro to 25 Meals on Wheels Providers to assist them in the unprecedented increase on services due to the Covid 19 Pandemic.

In 2021, IRL provided small grants of 1800 Euro to 27 Meals on Wheels Providers to assist in the increased pressures on services.

In discussions with Community Foundation of Ireland to make this a yearly fund.



Priorities for the Network Development Officer.

- **Communicate, listen and engage** with all providers regularly – to meet with all providers in each CHO area every quarter (this may change depending on the providers needs).

- Regular meetings with Samantha Rayner - General Manager, Office of the Head of Operations and Service Improvement, Services for Older People, Community Operations. These meetings will deliver feedback from service providers to the HSE and advocate for multi annual funding streams, potential service level agreements and sharing of relevant data to implement the delivery of care through dedicated care paths in line with the Slaintecare Implementation Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2023.
- Identify gaps in the provision of the MoW service and address how these gaps can be filled – through suitable business models/service providers and possible expansion/collaboration/additional providers.
- Identify funding streams outside of the HSE – through local agencies, government departments, corporate sponsorships, philanthropic donations.
- The Needs Analysis will be published on website shortly.



- Provide relevant training to providers in the form of workshops, peer mentoring etc. to aim towards a nationalised standard MoW service that is community led. (Funding allocated for this – details of training to be communicated in the coming months).
- Advocate for the MoW service to be included on the hospital discharge sheet in all CHO areas.
- Develop relevant relationships with PHN's, GP's, other home care providers in an attempt to resolve any gaps in the service.
- Distribute a quarterly newsletter to all members informing them of relevant topics, funding streams, suppliers and inviting participation from members and others relevant stakeholders knowledgeable in this field. (input from members would be greatly appreciated for this. I will be in touch shortly regarding this).
- Address supply chains, bulk buying, discounted purchasing, insurance and a standard price for the service.
- Meet with the Minister of State for the Department of Health, with responsibility for Mental Health and Older People, Mary Butler possibly in April 2022 to bring our proposals to her and advocate for necessary change.
- Aim towards a National Meals on Wheels Conference in 2022 and making it an annual event.
- Continue to update the website and Meals on Wheels interactive map. (Feedback on the website and map is greatly welcomed).



Launch of the Interactive Map and Website



- IRL has worked with Econceptz to produce a new National Meals on Wheels Network website. Funded through Rethink Ireland.
- Interactive Map/ Database- This is the first time meals on wheels has been mapped in Ireland. The interactive map and database contains 260 providers nationally. It was launched in September 2021 in Portlaw, Co. Waterford.
- It is important to note that it isn't perfect and needs to be updated continuously.

Please contact us if your details are not on the map so we can update it.



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Training Fund

- **Leadership and Change Management-** Voluntary Boards and Management need training to develop the leadership and management capacity needed to effect change.
- **Social Enterprise Development/Transition.** All Meals on Wheels providers operate somewhere on the social enterprise spectrum but there are great differences in approaches between providers. The Learning Network will work to enable transition to more sustainable social enterprise business models based on existing best practices in the membership.
- **Fundraising Marketing and Promotion. Stigma** around availing of the service has meant that the story of Meals on Wheels and its contribution to society remains underutilized as a business tool. Effective educational marketing, public relations and crowd-funding capacity is crucial to the future of the service. The Covid 19 pandemic has somewhat reduced this stigma but more work needs to be done in this area.
- **Reimagining the Volunteer Role.** The pandemic has highlighted a volunteering crisis among network members. The Learning network will look to equip members to provide expanded volunteer roles to help meet some of the challenges identified above and parallel training for volunteers themselves to fulfil such roles.



Questions

