

Meals on Wheels Newsletter

Information on services, programmes and supports

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Welcome to the Summer edition of the Meals on Wheels Quarterly Newsletter. We are delighted to share this issue which is full of useful and interesting information for you!

The Meals on Wheels Newsletter is supported by the Cork North and East Community Work Department, HSE Southwest.



Working in Partnership with the
Community and Voluntary
Sector in Cork and Kerry since
1975



KEEP WELL, KEEP MOVIN'



The "Keep Well, Keep Movin'" Festival, held on 15 April 2026, organised by the Cork North and East Community Work Department brought together community members for a full day of health, wellbeing, and practical supports.

Attendees explored a range of information stands before hearing from expert speakers on topics including brain health, physical activity, advance care planning, and home safety. The programme featured engaging sessions such as Singing for the Brain, Tips for Minding Your Wellbeing, and updates from ICPOP on delivering the right care in the right place. With contributions from the HSE, the Irish Hospice Foundation, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, and local fire services, the event offered a vibrant mix of learning, connection, and community spirit all designed to support people to stay well, stay active, and stay informed.

- Information Stands
- Brain Health
- Physical Activities
- Irish Hospice
- Singing for the Brain
- Wellbeing exercises
- Falls prevention
- Fire Safety
- Networking
- Refreshments

HEALTH INFORMATION

Expert advice on brain health, falls prevention, and more

ACTIVITIES & SOCIAL CONNECTION

Enjoy movement activities, music, and friendship

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT LIVING

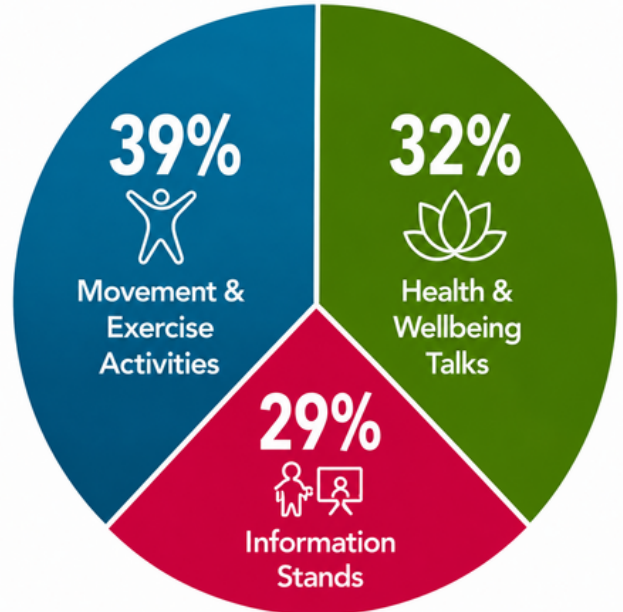
Empowering older adults to live well, stay well and keep moving.

KEEP WELL, KEEP MOVIN'



TOP 3 ACTIVITIES

What did you enjoy most?



WHAT PEOPLE LOVED MOST



Music / Singing Activities

24%



Guest Speakers

18%



Relaxation / Mindfulness

10%



Nutrition & Healthy Eating

16%



"It was the best ever, we come every year"

LOOKING FORWARD TO FUTURE EVENTS



Stay Sun Smart this Summer



As the summer approaches and the weather improves it's important as we age to protect our skin from sun exposure and indeed it's something we need to be mindful of all year round.

The SunSmart campaign is a key initiative that runs annually with the HSE's National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP), in collaboration with Healthy Ireland and crosssectoral partners.

The SunSmart campaign aims to get us into the habit of protecting our skin from the sun as part of daily routine. The campaign runs from April to September and outlines the steps you, your family, friends and colleagues can take to protect your skin from the sun and reduce your risk of skin cancer.



Follow the **5 S's** to keep safe in the sun:

1. **Slip** on clothing that covers your skin, such as long sleeves, collared t-shirts
2. **Slop** on broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen on exposed areas, using factor 30+ for adults and 50+ for children. Reapply regularly. No sunscreen can provide 100% protection, it should be used alongside other protective measures such as clothing and shade
3. **Slap** on a wide-brimmed hat
4. **Seek shade** - especially if outdoors between 11am and 3pm - and always use a sunshade on a child's buggy
5. **Slide** on sunglasses to protect your eyes.

As well as the **5 S's** it is important to remember: In Ireland, the UV radiation levels from the sun are highest 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 11am - 3pm. Do not deliberately try to get a suntan. Avoid getting a sunburn.

Never use a sunbed.

For more information visit www.hse.ie/sunsmart, contact: prevention@cancercontrol.ie or #SunSmart on social media.

National Volunteering Week

National Volunteering Week is a weeklong celebration of volunteering every year. 2026's festivities take place on 18-24th May! The theme for National Volunteering Week 2026 is 'From Every Corner, For Every Cause.'



**Mercy House Kanturk and Lismire senior citizens
Margo O Sullivan Hannah O Sullivan Natalia Lacerda**

This year's theme, "From Every Corner, For Every Cause," captures the heart of Meals on Wheels. Volunteers from every part of our communities come together for one shared purpose delivering hot meals, support, and connection to those who need it most. It's a perfect reflection of the everyday kindness that keeps this service going. We would also like to extend a sincere thank-you to all the Meals on Wheels services we support, and to every staff member and volunteer who makes this work possible. The photo above features members of the Mercy House Kanturk and Lismire Senior Citizens teams — Margo O'Sullivan, Hannah O'Sullivan, and Natalia Lacerda representing the dedication found in every corner of our region.

Men's Health Week 2026

We're now just a few weeks away from International Men's Health Week, taking place from Monday 15th June to Sunday 21st June 2026 – ending on Father's Day.

Free Man Manuals!

The free 'Action Man – ten top tips for men's health' booklet has been freshly updated for Men's Health Week 2026, giving men simple, practical ways to boost their health. Order your copy at www.healthpromotion.ie by searching Men's Health.

Men's Health Week



ONE STEP AT A TIME

– progress, not perfection

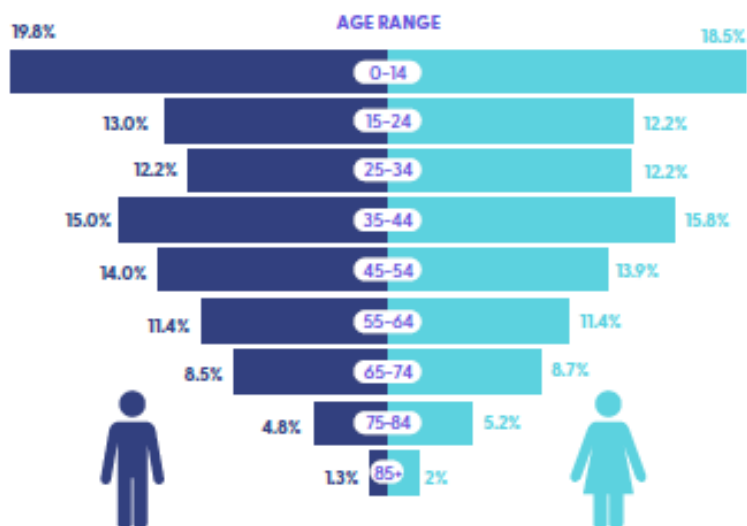


Men's Health in Numbers Republic of Ireland Men's Health Report Card

AGE PROFILE



MALES HAVE A YOUNGER AGE PROFILE THAN FEMALES



Source: CSO Table PEA01

GP VISITS

Attended a GP in previous 12 months

Males aged 15+: **70%**

Males aged 15-19: **52%**

Males aged 75+: **91.1%**

Source: Healthy Ireland 2023, CSO Table HIS17



Healthy Life Expectancy at Birth



HEALTHY LIFE EXPECTANCY FOR MALES HAS INCREASED



Source: Eurostat Table hith_hlye

SELF-REPORTED HEALTH

In 2023:

81% of males rated their health as good or very good

96% of males aged 15-19 rated their health as good or very good

67% of males aged 65-69 rated their health as good or very good

Source: Healthy Ireland 2023, CSO Table HIS01

THE NUMBER OF OLDER MEN IS EXPECTED TO RISE OVER THE NEXT 30 YEARS

Source: CSO Tables PEAT1, PEAT2



HEALTHY EATING FOR OLDER ADULTS

Nicola Canning, Dietitian, St Mary's Primary Care Centre

Older adults whom are in good health should aim to eat a healthy, balanced diet with good variety. This should consist of three meals, two-three snacks and enough fluids throughout your day. Each meal should have a variety of vegetables, salad or fruit, high fibre carbohydrates, these are brown cereals, breads, pasta, rice or potatoes) and high-quality protein such as lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs, dairy, pulses, nuts.

Why? Vegetables, salad and fruit provide you with plenty of vitamins and minerals. It is recommended to consume five-seven portions of these throughout your day. High fibre carbohydrates are important for providing you with energy. Choosing brown / wholegrain versions of these foods help to increase your fibre which will support good gut health. Protein is essential for muscle strength especially as we age, so it is important to have a serving at each meal. Aim to have 1-2 servings of oily fish such as salmon, mackerel or trout per week. Link to the online version of the older adult healthy eating guidelines:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/healthy-ireland/publications/healthy-eating-for-older-adults/>



Maintaining your best weight is also important for your health. If you have any concerns about your diet or your weight or have a medical condition that requires dietary changes, ask a GP or another healthcare professional to refer you to your local primary care dietitian for free additional support.

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HSE South West

COMMUNITY NUTRITION & DIETETIC SERVICE
THIS IS A FREE SERVICE

Would you like to eat better and feel healthier?
Are you trying to improve your heart health?
Do you have concerns about your child's eating habits?
Have you been in hospital recently?
Would you like support for menopause, endometriosis or PCOS?
Do you have a poor appetite?
Would you like to improve your gut health?

A CORU registered Community Dietitian can help!
A dietitian is trained to help you understand how food can affect your health.

HSE Community Dietitians support individuals, families, adults and children of all ages, to build healthy habits.



Dietitians are available in all local primary care centres.

Note: This is general information, if you have been advised on a specific diet for a medical condition always follow advice you have been personally prescribed.

TYPE 2 DIABETES, PRE-DIABETES & PEOPLE LIVING WITH OBESITY

Nicola Canning, Dietitian, St Mary's Primary Care Centre

The hub

A specialist dietetic service exists for people living with type 2 diabetes, pre-diabetes, and for people living with obesity. This dietetic service forms part of the HSE's wider Chronic Disease Management Programme.

The aim is to help people manage their condition, improve quality of life and reduce complications through evidence-based nutrition care.

Places are available on the next DISCOVER Diabetes, Type 2 Diabetes course in St Mary's Health Campus in June – apply via the QR code or ask your doctor to refer you.

There are also group education programmes available for those living with chronic conditions;

- DISCOVER Diabetes for people living with Type 2 diabetes
- Best Health for people living with obesity and related conditions.
- Diabetes Prevention Programme for people living with pre-diabetes

*Please contact your GP for a referral to the Chronic Disease Dietetic Service in Cork City North.

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HSE South West

DIETITIAN SERVICE CHRONIC DISEASE CORK CITY NORTH

Free access to a dietitian for people living with type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes, and for people living with obesity

Our Services

- One to one appointments
- Group Sessions

What can a registered dietitian do for me?

- Help you to understand how healthy eating and lifestyle habits can improve the management of your condition
- Support you to make changes to improve your food and lifestyle choices

Please contact your GP for a referral to the Chronic Disease Dietetic Service in Cork City North



Living with type 2 diabetes?

Let us help!

Join us on our free course

DISCOVER DIABETES – Type 2

This course is run by HSE community dietitians who are experts in food & health

During the course you will learn to:

- understand your diabetes
- identify how food and lifestyle can affect your diabetes
- prevent or reduce diabetes-related health problems
- manage your weight
- improve your overall health

Course details:

- Relaxed and enjoyable
- Friendly and welcoming
- Includes free booklets and information
- A family member, carer or friend can attend with you, just book a place for them.

'I would really recommend anyone to do this Discover Diabetes Course – newly diagnosed or long term diabetes. It brings it home to you how necessary it is to look after all aspects of diabetes' – Noreen, Tralee



Healthy Food



Balance



Physical Activity

In person course:

The course includes 4 weekly sessions.
Sessions last 2.5 hours.

Next date for those living in north city area:

June 2026

St Mary's Health Campus (Harbour View Building)

Register via QR code below or ask your GP to refer you and you will be contacted with times and dates.

Book your free place today!

Call: 1800 700 700

Book online: <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/type-2-diabetes/courses-and-support/>

QR code:



GET ACTIVE USING THE HSE APP



Get Active is an activity programme that builds your activity levels gradually over 10 weeks. By the end of the programme you will be meeting the National Physical Activity Guidelines.

What is in the programme?

Get Active includes:

- A walking plan
- Muscle-strengthening exercises using resistance bands
- Advice on keeping active

If you are inactive you will start with 10 minutes of walking, 3 times a week. Inactive means you are active 1 day a week, or not at all.

If you are a bit active you will start with 20 minutes of walking, 3 times a week.

Somewhat active means you are active 2 or 3 days a week.

Everyone does muscle-strengthening exercises, starting with once a week and increasing to twice a week.

You can either:

- Follow a video class with a trainer
- Do the exercises in your own time, with easy-to-follow videos

Every week you will also get a piece of advice on getting active.



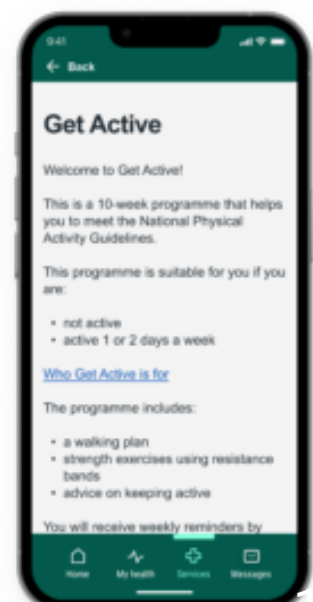
Get Active using the HSE app

To sign up for the programme you will need the **HSE Health app**.

To sign up to Get Active in the app:

Download the HSE Health App from the App Store or Google Play.

Log in to the app with your MyGovID and password. Go to the Living Well section and select Get Active.



**TO SIGN UP FOR THE
PROGRAMME YOU WILL NEED
THE HSE HEALTH APP.**

Summer Birdwatching

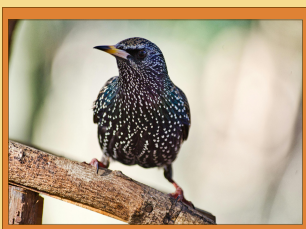
What You Might Spot From Home

Many of us enjoy watching the small bits of life happening just outside the window. Here are some of the birds you're most likely to see around Ireland during the summer months.

Why not tick off the ones you spot?



- ❑ **Robin:** A friendly visitor often seen hopping close to the door or garden pots.
- ❑ **Blackbird:** Known for its beautiful evening song; males are black with a yellow beak.
- ❑ **Blue Tit:** Small, colourful, and very common at feeders.
- ❑ **Great Tit:** A bold little bird with a black stripe down its chest.
- ❑ **Wren:** Tiny but loud; often heard before it's seen.
- ❑ **Goldfinch:** Bright red face and yellow wings; loves thistles and seeds.
- ❑ **Chaffinch:** One of Ireland's most common garden birds with a cheerful call.
- ❑ **Swallow:** A real sign of summer, swooping low over fields and gardens.
- ❑ **House Sparrow:** Chatty and social, often seen in small groups.
- ❑ **Magpie:** Black and white with a long tail; very common in towns and countryside.
- ❑ **Woodpigeon:** Large, gentle birds with a soft cooing call.
- ❑ **Starling:** Speckled feathers and often seen in groups on lawns or wires.



Wondering how to
take those first steps
to becoming more
active? Why not give
Fitline a call.



**Age &
Opportunity**

Incorporating **Age & Opportunity active**,
The National Sport and Physical Activity Programme
for Older People

FitLine

A **FREE**, nationwide
telephone mentoring
service supporting
people aged 50+
to be more active

**FREE
initiative
for over
50s**

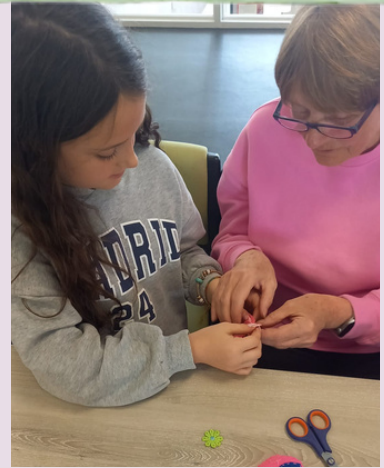


A friendly word to get you more active.

Call: **1800 303 545**
or **087-6211767**

FitLine Volunteer Mentors make regular phone calls to
people who would like to get more physically active.

Bealtaine Intergenerational Craft Gathering



As part of Bealtaine Festival, the Health Action Zone, HSE Southwest partnered with Hollyhill Library to host a heartwarming intergenerational craft group during May.

Children enjoyed creating their very own teddies alongside parents, grannies, and even great-grannies, making it a truly special community event. The session was filled with creativity, laughter, and meaningful connections between generations.

We were delighted to have Isabelle O'Neill as our wonderful facilitator on the day. Isabelle has previously facilitated Slow Stitching groups in Gurranabraher and Churchfield, which proved hugely popular within the community.

It was lovely to see so many familiar faces return, with many families who attended our intergenerational Christmas groups joining us once again for another memorable gathering.





This Bealtaine event highlighted the real strength of community creativity in Hollyhill. What stood out most was the sense of ease and belonging in the room older adults sharing stories, children proudly showcasing their creations, and families connecting across generations in a relaxed, joyful safe space.

Events like this remind us how important it is to create opportunities where people of all ages can come together, learn from one another, and build lasting community bonds. The feedback on the day was really positive, with many participants expressing interest in more intergenerational activities throughout the year.



I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.