

COVID-19 Community Response Forum Update Galway City LCDC, 21st April 2021

Galway City COVID-19 Community Response Forum

The COVID-19 Community Response Forum, established on 30th March 2020 continues to meet on regular basis to lead the co-ordination of COVID-19 community supports and resilience and to ensure that there is a co-ordinated community response, enabling all the voluntary and statutory agencies to collaborate in support of our communities and particularly our most vulnerable members. A number of issues and items of concern are raised and discussed for further action, focussing on the increase in demand for front-line services; education and issues in relation to educational disadvantage and restart supports for later in the year particularly for smaller community and voluntary groups and organisations who will find it difficult to return to any level of activity when the restrictions allow.

Galway City COVID-19 Community Call Helpline

The COVID-19 Community Call Helpline, led and coordinated by Galway City Council continues to provide a dedicated community response helpline to ensure that all vulnerable members of our community are appropriately supported as we move through the response to COVID-19. The Helpline continues to operate from 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday by Freephone 1800 400 150 and email to covidsupport@galwaycity.ie. Outside of normal working hours, including weekend's calls / requests will automatically route to our out of hours call service and are dealt with accordingly. A key purpose of the Helpline is to ensure that older people and those who are vulnerable in our community have access to very practical supports such as groceries, meals on wheels, medication collection and social supports / engagement. The Helpline has dealt with over 1,100 requests to date and the importance of a local response in this regard is essential.

#Keepwell Campaign



As members will be aware the aim of this campaign is resilience in the months ahead, as we look towards living with COVID-19. It's important to mind yourself and your physical and mental well-being. This campaign, funded by Sláintecare and led on by Healthy Ireland, involves a wide range of supports – across sports, creativity, connectedness, eating and community outreach. Visit gov.ie/healthyireland and www.galwaycity.ie/wellbeing for more information and resources. Galway City Council, with key partners are continuing to implement and deliver on a programme of activity under a number of themes in line with the end of June 2021 timeframe. Further information is available on www.galwaycity.ie/wellbeing and through Social and local media.

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage with the input of others have developed a new data hub to show the extensive work being done as part of the Community Call, Keep Well and other national COVID-19 response initiatives. To date, data had been collected daily in relation to Community Call activity and displayed on a data hub dashboard. From now going forward the new data hub developed will capture Community Call data for 2021 in addition to data relating to Keep Well. The objective is to collect data so that we can capture a sense of the levels of awareness about the campaign across the community and levels of engagement in events and activities.

Keep Well Booklet

HSE Community Services in Galway have joined with Galway City Council to support older people to mind their physical and mental health and wellbeing over the coming months by producing a 20-page booklet and series of accompanying videos, as part of a new range of initiatives under the Keep Well campaign. The booklet provides a range of practical advice focusing on the key themes of keeping active, staying connected, switching off, eating well and minding your mood. Visit www.galwaycity.ie/wellbeing/ to download the booklet and for further details and updates on all the local initiatives and activities. If you would like a copy of the free booklet which also contains useful telephone numbers for support and practical advice, please call the Galway City Community Call Helpline by Freephone 1800 400 150 or email to covidsupport@galwaycity.ie. The accompanying video series is available by searching “Community Healthcare West” on YouTube.



TIME TO CARE Phone Befriending programme

Time to Care is a phone befriending programme which reaches out to older adults who are feeling isolated during the ongoing COVID 19 restrictions. The programme is delivered by trained volunteers who will:

- Develop a friendly and supportive relationship
- Provide telephone support to alleviate loneliness and social isolation and help to build and support confidence and wellbeing
- Engage in conversation around creating a healthy routines which contributes to wellbeing

If you or someone you know would be interested in a regular chat over the phone with a trusted volunteer please feel free to call COPE Galway on our Helpline 085 87 67 785 and we will set this up.

Grow it Forward Initiative

The Grow It Forward 2021 initiative, as part of the Government's Keep Well campaign and funded by Sláintecare through the Healthy Ireland fund. This initiative, in partnership with Healthy Ireland and Libraries Ireland is designed to help the nation's wellbeing by inspiring and supporting people to grow some of their own food and plants at home while connecting with friends and family to join them. Through this initiative, 50,000 seed packs will be given and participants asked to use the kits to share the experience with ten people, enabling half a million people across Ireland to enjoy the wide range of benefits that come from growing food at home. In addition there is a vast online library of ebooks and emagazines available to all registered members and we are encouraging those not already library members to join online so that they are supported in their growing journey by the library service.

Healthy Ireland at Your Library

Galway Public Libraries organise an annual programme of events for the nationwide [#HealthyIrelandatYourLibrary](#) initiative. Due to current public health restrictions, talks cannot take place in library branches. We have commissioned online talks to share with our library patrons and these are available to view on the Galway Public Libraries Facebook page. In the latest talk Megan Casey and Rachael Henry are community pharmacists, passionate about health and wellness. They advocate a healthy lifestyle with good nutrition and regular exercise, while adhering carefully to the advice of medical practitioners.

Gardening for Wildlife and Wellness

In March and April Galway Volunteer will be running free online workshops to share tips and practices on gardening for biodiversity as follows:

- [Rewild Your Garden And Plant For Pollinators](#) - March 31st at 7pm -8.30pm
- [Encourage Wildlife In The Garden](#) - April 7th at 7pm -8.30pm
- [Grow Your Own Organic Vegetables](#) - April 14th at 7pm -8.30pm
- [Grow Your Own Organic Fruit](#) - April 21st at 7pm -8.30pm
- [Compost, Re-Use And Recycle In The Garden](#) - April 28th at 7pm -8.30pm

The trainer is Kay Synott of Living Gardens who is a qualified horticulturist, school gardening specialist and garden designer with a particular emphasis on organic and wildlife gardening. For further details and workshop registrations please visit the [Volunteer Galway Website - here](#).

COVID-19 Information Campaign for Students and Young Adults

The Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Simon Harris TD has launched a [new COVID-19 information campaign for students and young adults](#). The video, which has been made in partnership with HSE Public Health West highlights the risks associated with gatherings and gives a real-life example of a recent outbreak that led to hundreds of COVID-19 infections. The video outlines the risks associated with gatherings of friends. What started as one meet-up resulted in 400 cases. It shows how easily the virus can spread and how a breach of the restrictions can really set back the progress we are making.

Jigsaw's youth mental health and wellbeing toolkit for schools

Jigsaw has developed a toolkit for schools to support school staff to build the mental health literacy of young people, support them to manage their mental health and to develop help-seeking skills. This toolkit is interactive, providing opportunities for young people to explore topics related to mental health and wellbeing. Active engagement in learning about wellbeing supports young people to normalise conversations around mental health and ask for help if needed. All the Jigsaw resources support young people to be actively involved in their learning

so that they can develop wellbeing skills. These include a mix of methodologies including classroom discussions, animations, scenarios, reflective exercises and other worksheets. The toolkit also includes support materials for staff on the delivery of these resources so that they can use the resources in a way that meets the needs of their young people.

[Jigsaw's Youth Mental Health Toolkit for Schools | Jigsaw Schools Hub](#)

Research study on the impact of COVID-19 on wellbeing of young people (12-18 years)

Researchers from NUI Galway and Trinity College Dublin are currently conducting a research study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the wellbeing of Irish teenagers, and are inviting young people (12-18 years) from across the country to take part. There are 3 surveys in total. For more information including parental / guardian consent forms please visit [ADAPT STUDY \(adaptresearchstudy.com\)](#)



Health and Wellbeing Short Course on Managing Stress and Anxiety

A short course on managing stress and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic has been developed by the Department of Occupational Therapy in Mental Health in St James's Hospital. The course is 40 minutes long and is broken down into four parts:

Part 1: Introduction, what is occupational therapy, what is stress and anxiety
<https://youtu.be/Gf7aTG2g3y4>

Part 2: Feelings - identifying and coping with them <https://youtu.be/SwabTR5eH3Q>

Part 3: Thoughts - identifying and coping with them <https://youtu.be/5o315FPgBj0>

Part 4: Behaviours - identifying and coping with them and a note on goal setting
<https://youtu.be/xzpR1uQgsmI>

Minding Your Wellbeing

HSE Health & Wellbeing have a free, online mental health and wellbeing programme called Minding Your Wellbeing. The programme consists of a series of 5 video sessions of around 20 minutes – click [here](#) or log on to www.yourmentalhealth.ie



Stress Control Online Course – commencing from April 5th 2021

HSE Health and Wellbeing are offering a free Stress Control programme that teaches you practical skills to deal with stress. The six sessions are 90 minutes each and will cover different topics. Participants are encouraged to watch all sessions, but participants can join at any stage for one or more session. To register visit www.stresscontrol.ie.

HSE for National Lottery Funding Grants

Applications are now being invited by the HSE for National Lottery Funding Grants. This funding is distributed by the HSE each year to community based groups and voluntary organisations under the Respite Care Grant Scheme and the National Lottery Grant Scheme. Groups and organisations involved in the provision of Health and Personal Social Services can apply for once off funding of between €500 and €10,000 for suitable projects. Information including the application form is available on www.hse.ie/lotterygrants. The closing date for applications is 12 noon on Friday 16th April 2021. Applicants will be advised as to the outcome of their application by 30th July 2021.

West Be Well

Community, voluntary and statutory involved in wellbeing, mental health promotion, and suicide prevention initiatives in Galway, Mayo and Roscommon have developed this resource. This common platform communicates key health messages and promotes education and training events. It also provides contact details for a wide range of national and local services which are government funded and available in the community. Visit <https://www.westbewell.ie/> for further information.

COVID-19 Stability funding for community and voluntary groups

A €10 million fund is to be established to assist community and voluntary organisations, charities and social enterprises, which have suffered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The €10 million investment builds on the €45 million COVID-19 Stability Fund which in 2020, supported over 600 organisations to continue delivering vital services to the most vulnerable in our communities. The new funding, agreed as part of the Government's Resilience and Recovery Plan, is targeted at organisations that have seen their trading and/or fundraising income drop significantly as a result of the pandemic. The funding will be administered by Pobal on behalf of the Department of Rural and Community Development and details of the online application process will be published shortly.

Galway City Community Response Map

As part of the ongoing work of the Galway City Community Network (GCCN), Galway City Council have developed in partnership a map of the COVID-19 related responses, activities and services available to people in Galway City. The map is publicly available and can be used as a useful information resource both for individuals made vulnerable by COVID-19 and by organisations or agencies that need to know where they may refer their clients to for support. The map is online at the following links:

- Desktop version: <https://www.galwaycity.ie/GalwayCityCommunityDashboard>
- Mobile version: <https://www.galwaycity.ie/GalwayCityCommunityMap>

COVID-19 Vaccination Poster for Travellers

The [COVID-19 Vaccination information poster for Travellers is available here.](#)

HSE COVID-19 Vaccination information videos for Travellers

These videos were produced in partnership with Pavee point, HSE National Social Inclusion office, National Immunisation Office and HSE Communications.

[HSE Traveller COVID-19 Vaccine Information Video Part 1](#)

- Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe for me? Why is it important to get the COVID-19 vaccine? If I've already had COVID-19, do I still need the vaccine? Can I still get COVID-19 after getting the vaccine? Where can I get more information about the COVID-19 vaccines - Information I can trust?

[HSE Traveller COVID-19 Vaccine Information Video Part 2](#)

- When can I get the COVID-19 vaccine? Consent and what are the side effects of COVID-19 vaccine?

SICAP Responses to COVID-19 – Challenges, Opportunities & Learning

During March 2021, Pobal and the Department of Rural and Community Development hosted a series of programme support workshops that focused on the SICAP response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The first workshop held on 23rd March 2021 included the online launch of the report 'The Role of SICAP in Supporting New Communities' by Joe O'Brien TD, Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development. The report explored the role that the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) plays in addressing the barriers to social inclusion that are experienced by members of new communities in Ireland, as well as how the programme contributes to integration of members of new communities in Ireland. The report findings indicate that SICAP is strongly aligned with national and international integration frameworks and includes strong examples of good practice specifically contributing to five key factors of integration; employment, education, access to services, social connection and political participation. A copy of the report can be viewed on <https://www.pobal.ie/programmes/social-inclusion-and-community-activation-programme-sicap-2018-2022/>