

National Updates



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Public Health Measures

Ireland remains at level 5 restrictions. You can see the [measures in place here](#).

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

The vaccination programme continues to be rolled out nationwide, and more than 280,000 vaccines have been administered. Daily vaccination data is now available to all on the COVID-19 Data Hub and is on the COVID-19 Tracker App. The data is from 48 hours previously to allow for validation. Since Monday the 15th of February GP's have been inviting people aged 85 and over to have their COVID-19 vaccine, bringing the vaccine programme firmly into the community. **If you are aged 85 or older, your GP will contact you when your vaccine is available – Don't Worry You Will be Contacted.** You'll find answers to your questions about the vaccination programme on www.hse.ie/covid19vaccines.

COVID-19 vaccine information for people with sight loss

Working with NCBI, information about COVID-19 vaccines for people with sight loss have been created in Braille, audio and large print. These have been distributed to NCBI members. The large print format is also [available on hse.ie](#).

Where to find COVID-19 Vaccination Information

Age Friendly Ireland are delighted to be partnering with the HSE to support the distribution of COVID-19 Vaccination Information and we **ENCOURAGE EVERYONE** to read about the COVID-19 vaccine and to get their information from a factual, trusted source – here are the links to the pages with information on the vaccine:

- Check hse.ie/covid19vaccine for information about the vaccine, information on this page is updated regularly
- Find the vaccine information materials at www.hse.ie/covid19vaccinematerials
- Details on getting the COVID-19 vaccine is updated regularly [here](#)
- Read the [full COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Strategy](#)
- Read the [National Immunisation Advisory Committee Chapter about COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine information for health professionals](#)

	<p>Online Stress Control programme The Online Stress Control programme is available at stresscontrol.ie HSE Health and Wellbeing are offering a free Stress Control programme. Stress Control is an evidence-based programme that teaches you practical skills to deal with stress. The programme helps participants recognise the signs of stress. It covers topics including how stress affects our bodies and our thoughts. It teaches skills to overcome panicky feelings and tips to getting a good night's sleep. Dr Jim White will live-stream the classes, free-of-charge. You can watch the sessions either in the afternoon or evening. This is a free programme. Find out more on www.stresscontrol.ie</p> <p>Public Health Information Links As always, for the most up to date information and advice on Coronavirus, please go to: www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/ ; https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/.</p>
 <p>Irish Gerontological Society</p>	<p>Irish Gerontological Society Getting Ireland's Adults COVID-Vaccination Ready</p> <p>A recording of this online lecture event held on Wednesday, the 17th of February is now available on the IGS website HERE. The event includes a discussion with Prof Luke O'Neill around factors which influence choice of COVID-19 vaccines. Prof Rose Anne Kenny also presented evidence for behaviours and supplements which boost antibody responsiveness following vaccination. The lecture was co-chaired by Ms Olivia O'Leary, Journalist, and Dr Diarmuid O'Shea, Consultant Geriatrician and the panellists included: Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer HSE; Dr Siobhán Kennelly, National Clinical and Advisory Group Lead for Older Persons (HSE); Prof Rose Galvin, Physiotherapist; Ms Deirdre Lang, Director of Nursing Older Persons Services (HSE).</p>
 <p>Irish Hospice Foundation</p>  <p>Care & Inform Support for Grieving in Exceptional Times</p>	<p>Free Irish Hospice Foundation bereavement resource pack to help those living with loss during COVID-19</p> <p>On Tuesday the 16th February the Irish Hospice Foundation launched their free bereavement resource pack, 'Support for Grieving in Exceptional Times' as we approach 4,000 COVID-19 deaths. It includes all the resources developed as part of IHF's Care & Inform hub which was specially created to respond to the needs of those facing dying, death and bereavement during COVID-19 restrictions. Support for Grieving in Exceptional times includes advice and guidance on acknowledging and coping with grief from a COVID-19 death, what to expect when planning a funeral as well as helping children deal with loss and grief.</p> <p>The pack also includes three resources for those supporting bereaved children as the response to the pandemic continues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping children grieve during COVID-19 • Supporting teenagers to grieve during COVID-19 • Finding new ways for children to say goodbye

	<p>These resources have been developed with IHF's Irish Childhood Bereavement Network (ICBN).</p> <p>IHF also runs Ireland's only national Bereavement Support Line. It's a freephone service, 1800 80 70 77 and is available Monday to Friday, 10am-1pm. It's for anyone experiencing grief and loss; a COVID-19 related death or a death from other causes or maybe a previous loss is feeling more difficult during the current restrictions.</p>
 <p>An Roinn Sláinte Department of Health</p>  <p>Safeguarding IRELAND</p> <p>Promoting the rights of vulnerable adults</p>	<p>Minister for Health welcomes publication of two reports to inform health sector adult safeguarding policy</p> <p>The Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD, this week emphasised the importance of safeguarding adults at risk of abuse and harm and welcomed the publication of two important reports on adult safeguarding providing the views of key adult health service users and a comprehensive international evidence review.</p> <p>Both publications were commissioned by the Department of Health to inform its ongoing development of a national policy on adult safeguarding in the health and social care sector. They will ensure that the policy will have an up-to-date evidence base and that it will be informed by the voices of relevant service users.</p> <p>Launching the reports on Tuesday, Minister Donnelly confirmed his Department's commitment to bringing forward a draft policy on adult safeguarding in the health sector. This policy will build on the existing health sector framework of standards, policies and procedures for adult safeguarding which includes national adult safeguarding standards developed by HIQA and the Mental Health Commission and a range of HSE supports including a HSE National Safeguarding Office.</p> <p>Minister Donnelly stated: "I am delighted to launch these important research papers on adult safeguarding today. Due to the efforts of those involved in producing this research, the new national policy on adult safeguarding in the health and social care sector, which my Department is developing, will have a robust evidence base and will be informed by the voices of our service users.</p> <p>"I am grateful to the Institute of Public Health for conducting the focus groups on my Department's behalf with service users in a number of groups, including people with intellectual disabilities, people with cognitive impairments (dementia and acquired brain injury), people who have experienced significant mental health challenges, and residents of nursing homes. I am particularly grateful to the participants for sharing their time and opinions. For good public services it is essential to listen and take account of our service users' lived experiences and views. The evidence review will be a valuable resource to ensure the policy is based on comprehensive, reliable, and up-to-date evidence.</p>

	<p>“This time of national challenge shows the fundamental importance of being a community of people who take care of those who may be at risk of harm or abuse.”</p> <p>The reports can be accessed here.</p>
 <p>An Roinn Tithíochta, Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage</p> 	<p>Retrofitting Programme for Social Housing announced</p> <p>Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O’Brien TD, Minister of State with responsibility for Local Government and Planning, Peter Burke TD, and Minister of State for Heritage and Electoral Reform Malcolm Noonan yesterday announced allocations and targets under the Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme for Social Housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An initial allocation of €35m for the retrofitting of 1,293 homes • The balance of funding (€10m) will then be allocated to LAs who demonstrate an ability to complete additional work and spend their full allocation in 2021 • The Programme for Government (PfG) commits to retrofitting 500,000 homes to a B2/Cost Optimal Equivalent BER standard by 2030. It is expected that approximately 36,500 of those will be local authority owned homes <p>The Programme for Government 2020 set challenging and ambitious targets over the next ten years aimed at Ireland’s objective of reducing its carbon emissions by more than half. With approximately 40% of Ireland’s energy-related carbon emissions coming from buildings alone, one of the key objectives of the Programme is the target of retrofitting reaching over 500,000 homes by 2030, of which it is expected that approximately 36,500 of those will be local authority owned homes. In response to this commitment the Energy Efficiency Retrofitting programme has been revised and enhanced for 2021, homes retrofitted under this programme will benefit householders in many ways, they will be warmer, easier to heat and more comfortable homes, it will enhance air quality in the home and for those currently using oil or gas they will see savings on energy bills. Full press release, comments and details of allocations available HERE</p>
 	<p>Expressway announce the introduction of new MyExpressway ticketing platform for expressway.ie</p> <p>From Tuesday 23rd February 2021, customers will be able to avail of new features when booking Expressway services online, on board and at ticket vending machines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance Seat reservations on ALL Expressway routes with priority boarding for pre-booked customers. • Seat Reservation now available on Expressway.ie for Free Travel Scheme passengers. • New ways to pay onboard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Contactless,



- o Apple Pay,
- o Android Pay,
- o TFI Leap Card

Seat reservation passengers will receive priority boarding. Once all are boarded, seats for your chosen service will become available on a first come, first served basis. Walk up customers will be boarded subject to availability after all "Seat Reservation" passengers are boarded. All passengers are encouraged to book in advance to avoid disappointment.

Tickets purchased on routes serviced by both Expressway and Bus Éireann PSO, are only valid for whichever service (Expressway or Bus Éireann PSO) is selected at the time of purchase. This is a change from previous practice. There will be a grace period of four weeks until March 23rd before this is implemented.

Queries can be directed to CustomerCare@expressway.ie and all e-tickets will be issued from tickets@expressway.ie. Customers are reminded that Expressway services continue to operate at reduced capacity under current public health restrictions and Government advice is that public transport should be avoided unless the travel is essential. Passengers are asked to remain polite and respectful towards drivers and other transport workers at all time. Please remember to wear a face covering when using public transport.



St Patrick's Festival 2021 goes virtual with diverse stories and sounds of Ireland



The programme for the National St Patrick's Festival, 12th – 17th March 2021, was unveiled on Wednesday. 'Dúisigh Éire! Awaken Ireland!' is the theme of this year's festival, a clarion call to the Irish across the world to throw off the long, dark months and rise to embrace the brighter days ahead. St Patrick's Festival is made possible through the continued support of the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Fáilte Ireland, Dublin City Council, and many generous partners and funders. Dúisigh Éire! Awaken Ireland! promises to be a positive and uplifting celebration of our incredible people, our beautiful island, our community bonds, our young people, artists, creators and makers, and our

	<p>diaspora across the world. The Festival will connect our global family, to mark our national day, through remembrance and celebration, song and story, laughter and tears, exploring the unique ties that bind us as a people. The Festival Programme is now available www.stpatricksfestival.ie.</p>
  	<p>DCU Age Friendly University Green Paper on Ageing</p> <p>The European Union adopted a Green Paper on Ageing to launch a broad policy debate on ageing to discuss how to anticipate and respond to the challenges and opportunities that ageing brings. It opens a wide debate on the impact of demographic change – for citizens of all ages and society as a whole. It raises questions that span across the life-cycle – from the formative years to working age, retirement and the various stages of growing needs. This requires immediate action if we want to ensure intergenerational fairness and good living standards for all citizens, young and old.</p> <p>You are invited to attend a virtual information session on The Green Paper on Ageing 10.30am – 11.30am, Thursday, 4th March 2021, register HERE. The event will open discussions on the impact of demographic change, raising questions of concern across the life span of individuals. This will be followed by a consultation session, offering all attendees the opportunity to engage in the policy debate and to have a say in their future 10.30am – 12.30pm, Thursday, 11th March 2021, register HERE. Following the consultation, DCU will make a submission reflecting those views on issues raised All age groups are welcome to participate For further information and to register, please use the Eventbrite links above.</p>
	<p>Joe Wicks – The Body Coach</p> <p>On the 4th of February Joe Wicks released another wonderful 15 Minute Low Impact Low Intensity Workout for older people on his YouTube Channel - The Body Coach TV. The workout includes 15 moves in 15 minutes with 35 seconds work and 25 second's rest. Why not give it a go? You can access the video HERE</p>

The classes are available on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) and the timetable shows where each class is available.



LIVE EXERCISE CLASSES
TO STAY ACTIVE

@SIELBLEUIRELAND

	CIRCUIT CLASS	STRENGTH & BALANCE	MOBILITY & STRETCH	CHAIR GYM
MON 22ND	CIRCUIT WITH JAMES	STRENGTH & BALANCE WITH PAUL	CIRCUIT WITH MAGGS	CHAIR GYM WITH MICHAEL
TUE 23RD			STRENGTH & BALANCE WITH MATT	CHAIR GYM WITH MICHELLE
WED 24TH	CIRCUIT WITH JAMES			CHAIR GYM WITH MICHAEL
THU 25TH		STRENGTH & BALANCE WITH MATT		CHAIR GYM WITH CORMAC
FRI 26TH	CIRCUIT WITH DEBORAH			CHAIR GYM WITH SHANE
SAT 27TH			MOBILITY & STRETCH WITH CORMAC	

11AM

2PM

ON FACEBOOK
ON YOUTUBE



Join us live on Facebook
Monday 22nd
Wednesday 24th
and Friday 26th

at 11am for
Age & Opportunity
Movement Minutes



#AgeandOpportunity

Sessions can be watched live on their Facebook page www.facebook.com/ageandopportunity or afterwards on their YouTube page www.youtube.com/ageandopportunity where a playlist of all Movement Minutes sessions to date can be viewed.

Local Updates



Clare Age Friendly Programme | Smartphone Project for Older People



The Age Friendly Programme Manager is working with the Clare Older People's Council (OPC) on ways to help older people in Clare "stay connected" at this time. Since the majority of activities during level 5 restrictions take place online, it was agreed

during a recent Community Response Forum meeting that digital support for older people is of the utmost importance to improve social connection and combat isolation.

The OPC have managed to secure a small amount of grant funding through the Community Support Scheme (CSS) which they have used to purchase approx. 40 smartphones from Vodafone. They wrote to the 4 Family Resource Centres & Clarecare who are delivering befriending services, to identify older people most in need of these devices i.e. have no means to purchase a smartphone, may be suffering from feelings of isolation and loneliness. Each device will be accompanied by a "Staying Digitally Connected" booklet developed by the Clare Age Friendly Programme which incorporates Age Action's "[Getting Started Kit](#)" as well as other useful information to support older people.



Ireland's first dedicated wildlife hospital to open in Co Meath

Ireland's first ever dedicated wildlife hospital will open in two weeks' time in the grounds of a pub in Co Meath, which is currently closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is a dream come true for Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland, the not-for-profit organisation who say they will be relying on public funding to make it a success. The overall cost for the year is expected to be in the region of €140,000. The McCarthy family have run the Tara Na Rí Pub at Garlow Cross in Co Meath for over 12 years. They closed their doors last March but when restrictions eased, they operated an outdoor service. However, when further restrictions were announced, they came up with a new plan and are excited to embark on two new ventures on the grounds of the pub.

Work is under way to convert stables located behind the pub into an intensive care unit and individual animal units. Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland has secured an initial 12-month lease on the site to open the hospital. It will be run by a team of volunteers who are either qualified, studying, or have the necessary experience in animal care.

The hospital project has been a long time in the making according to Aoife McPartlin, WRI's Schools Education officer. Read the full story of RTE [HERE](#)

Your Voice



We've heard about so much good work going on all around the country, please let us know what's happening in your area so we can share those innovative ideas with everyone. Please email us your news to Rachel at rleavy@meathcoco.ie Information is one thing we can share right now!

International Updates



International
Federation on
Ageing

IFA Virtual Town Hall | In Conversation with Dr. Pat Armstrong: Addressing Challenges Older Women face in the Workplace

The International Federation on Ageing held a Town Hall event earlier today called 'In Conversation with Dr. Pat Armstrong: Addressing Challenges Older Women face in the Workplace'. A recording of this event will be available on the Federation's website <https://ifa.ngo/>



Diabetes Alert! Series Town Hall | In Conversation with Dr David Chaney: Barriers and Challenges to Access to Routine Care | 25th February 2021, 12noon GMT

As one of the most prevalent global non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in high and lower-middle-income countries, the impact of diabetes cannot be ignored. It is an important public health problem, and one of four priority NCDs targeted for action by world leaders. For those living with diabetes, it remains a complex condition requiring knowledge, self-management, lifestyle choices, routine medical care, and psychosocial support.

This month's Diabetes Alert! Series town hall highlights the importance of addressing challenges to routine care and promoting patient awareness and education. As part of the DR Barometer program, the Diabetes Alert! Series town halls aim to bring together key stakeholders to address gaps in patient awareness and education of diabetic eye diseases, as well as barriers to screening and treatment services, and identify opportunities to overcome them through collaborative and cross-sectoral partnerships. You can register to attend [HERE](#)

Important Tips

Always have your **Eircode** close by in case of emergency. You can find your Eircode [here](#)

Perhaps keep a **daily diary** to record the people you are in contact with every day, so if you develop symptoms it will be easier to trace them

Useful Contacts

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office Telephone: 046 9097413
 Or Email: rlavy@meathcoco.ie

HSE Advice Line: Callsave 1850 24 1850
 Call from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday

The following is the list of each **Local Authority’s Helpline** phone numbers

Local Authority	Community Response Number
Carlow County Council	1800 814 300
Cavan County Council	1800 300 404
Clare County Council	1800 203 600
Cork City Council	1800 222 226
Cork County Council	1800 805 819
Donegal County Council	1800 928 982
Dublin City Council	01 222 8555
DLR County Council	1800 804 535
Fingal County Council	1800 459 059
Galway City Council	1800 400 150
Galway County Council	1800 928 894
Kerry County Council	1800 807 009
Kildare County Council	1800 300 174
Kilkenny County Council	1800 326 522

Laois County Council	1800 832 010
Leitrim County Council	1800 852 389
Limerick City and County Council	1800 832 005
Longford County Council	1800 300 122
Louth County Council	1800 805 817
Mayo County Council	094 906 4660
Meath County Council	1800 808 809
Monaghan County Council	1800 804 158
Offaly County Council	1800 818 181
Roscommon County Council	1800 200 727
Sligo County Council	1800 292 765
South Dublin County Council	1800 240519
Tipperary County Council	076 106 5000
Waterford City and County Council	1800 250 185
Westmeath County Council	1800 805 816
Wexford County Council	053 919 6000
Wicklow County Council	1800 868 399