

National Updates



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

KEEP WELL



Public Health Measures

New Level 5 restrictions have come into place.

You can see the [measures in place here](#).

We are experiencing an unprecedented surge in COVID-19 cases in Ireland. Right now, we all need to stay at home and act as if we have COVID-19.

Updates to COVID-19 Testing and Tracing

Main changes to COVID-19 Testing and Tracing, effective from the 31st December:

- The HSE will not be referring close contacts for a test. This is so that people who are symptomatic can be prioritised and receive a test as quickly as possible.
 - People who received notification by SMS that they are a close contact must restrict their movements for 14 days. If they develop symptoms, they should call their GP or GP Out of Hours service and arrange a test.
 - The text message that is sent to close contacts will now advise every close contact that they should restrict their movements and if they show symptoms, they should immediately contact their GP to arrange a test.
- Close contacts can also access advice for them on this link

<https://hse.ie/cvdcc>

This temporary measure is being implemented in consultation with GPs, to ensure those who have symptoms are tested as quickly as possible and that we can continue to try to reduce the spread of the virus.

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Since 29th December, the HSE has been giving the vaccine to people in the highest priority groups – frontline healthcare workers, and people living in long-term care facilities who are aged 65 or over.

The COVID-19 vaccine will offer you protection from COVID-19. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine should also protect you from the serious complications of COVID-19. The aim in offering the vaccine to the population is to protect people and reduce the illness and deaths caused by this virus.

The HSE encourage everyone in Ireland to read about the COVID-19 vaccine and to get their information from a factual, trusted source – www.gov.ie/covid19vaccine is a good place to start, and you can find COVID-19 vaccine information materials at

www.hse.ie/covid19vaccinematerials

Face coverings

This video demonstrates the correct way to wear a face covering. Face coverings are advised where social distancing is not possible, such as in crowded outdoor areas, indoor communal workplaces and in shops and on public transport. Find out more: www.gov.ie/en/publication/aac74c-guidance-on-safe-use-of-face-coverings/#face-coverings
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OBR0udolaiY>

Public Health Information

As always, for the most up to date information and advice on Coronavirus, please go to: <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/c36c85-covid-19-coronavirus/> and <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>

HSE Minding Your Wellbeing programme

<https://www2.hse.ie/healthy-you/minding-your-wellbeing-programme.html>

This evidence-based programme provides a unique opportunity for people to learn more about mindfulness, gratitude, self-care and resilience. As we continue to adapt our lifestyles to deal with COVID-19 and are faced with different challenges, Minding Your Wellbeing aims to provide simple tools and guidance to develop and maintain a positive outlook by looking after our mental health and wellbeing.

This programme focuses on the promotion of mental wellbeing and has been adapted from a face-to-face programme into a series of short online videos for the public at this time. It's free to access anytime so why not try one of the videos and go from there.

Sport Ireland Senior Strength Keep Well Programme for the over 70s:

The suite of physical activity exercise videos developed by Sport Ireland under the Keep Well Campaign specifically focused for The Over 70's available through this link

<https://www.sportireland.ie/video-series-3>

Public Services Card

We have been advised by the Chair of the Older People's Council in Wicklow, Mai Quaid, that if your Public Services Card is due to expire you will no longer get a new card in the post automatically. You must contact the Department of Social Protection to request a renewal. The contact number is 071 9672338.

Safeguarding Ireland | Vulnerable Customers Registers for Utilities

Safeguarding Ireland encourage everyone to be aware of and to promote the Vulnerable Customers Registers which exist for user's energy and water. All energy and water utility companies are required to provide such a register. According to the Commission of Regulation of Utilities (CRU) energy customers can be classified as 'a vulnerable customer' if they meet the following:

- If critically dependent on electrically powered equipment. This includes (but is not limited to) life protecting devices, assistive



technologies to support independent living and medical equipment, or

- If particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months for reasons of advanced age or physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health.

Customers of Irish Water can be classified as a vulnerable customer if they meet the following:

- If critically dependant on water for their medical needs, or
- If for reasons that may include advanced age or physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health reasons, you require additional support communicating with, or receiving services from, Irish Water.

What a Vulnerable Customer should do?

If a person or member of their household is a vulnerable customer, it is important that they let their energy supplier and / or Irish Water know. The Utilities must take reasonable steps to identify customers who should be included. However, it is up to the customers to let them know if they qualify as a vulnerable customer.

Being on the register helps to safeguard those who are vulnerable. Also, other important benefits can arise. For example, in December Electric Ireland announced an additional €100 credit to 10,000 people on its vulnerable customers register to support them during the pandemic.

Initiatives such as this are to be encouraged, particularly at this time, however the key message is that people must be registered to avail of them.



An Update from The Alzheimer Society of Ireland | Online Supports

ASI currently run 6 Virtual Cafés each month. They are named after the locations in which their face-to-face cafés used to run but persons from all over Ireland are welcome at these. The details of when they run, as well as a contact emails to request an invitation, are available on our website here: <https://alzheimer.ie/service/alzheimer-cafe/>

The Café times are as follows:

First Tuesday of the month at 11:30am - Tipp/Waterford

First Wednesday of the month at 11am - Meath

Second Tuesday of the month at 4:30pm - Louth/Monaghan

Third Tuesday of the month at 11am - Galway

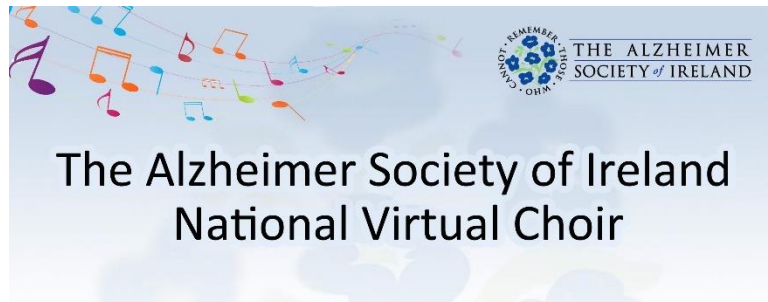
Last Tuesday of the month at 11am - Wexford

Last Tuesday of the month at 7pm - Glasnevin

They have guest speakers and performers each month and it's always informative and great fun.

They also run a Virtual Social Club where they have sing-alongs, quizzes and generally share some laughs and a sense of community with each other. For more information people can contact: Jamie.SherlockWalsh@alzheimer.ie

They have recently launched their National Virtual Dementia Choir which runs weekly with musical director Aisling Gaudet. Participants can sing along, move to the music, shake an instrument or simply sit back and enjoy depending on their wishes and needs. They also run this as a not-for-profit subscription service for nursing homes to incorporate into their activities program and details for this can be gotten by emailing asinationalvirtualchoir@alzheimer.ie



Date and Time:
Every Thursday from 2pm - 3pm

With Musical Director: Aisling Gaudet

Join us virtually in making musical memories



To register please email:
asinationalvirtualchoir@alzheimer.ie
or call Jamie on: 0860442964

*Reminisce and engage with a
bespoke selection of songs:
from golden oldies to modern favourites.*



AgeAction
For all older people

Age Action | Upcoming Virtual Event

If there are older people who need assistance in using zoom then they can follow the guide [HERE](#) or get in touch with Age Action and they will see what they can do to get you online.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 27th at 10.30am

[Webinar](#) – Community and Family Mediation Service / Making a Will

Meeting ID: 813 5068 6979

Passcode: 501027

	<p>They will continue both the film and webinar series every second Friday (Jan 29th, Feb 12th & 26th) and Wednesday (Feb 10th & Feb 24th)</p> <p>All of the previous webinars are available to view on the Age Action YouTube Channel if you missed any of the previous series or wish to let your friends know about them. All these events are free to access and you are welcome to let others know that they can also participate by registering at events@ageaction.ie. If you've any questions or suggestions you are encouraged to drop a line to events@ageaction.ie</p>
	<p>Irish Hospice Foundation Creatives responses to death, dying and loss during COVID-19 and bereavement workshops</p> <p>Irish Hospice Foundation Workshops on Loss & Bereavement 2021 workshops on Loss and Bereavement run from January to June online. For the full listing and to book: https://bit.ly/3pEdvFU</p> 
 <p>Irish Centre for Social Gerontology</p>	<p>NUI Galway Irish Centre for Social Gerontology Emotionally Traumatic Research Virtual Seminar Series</p> <p>A new virtual seminar series on Emotionally Traumatic Research will begin with its first of four seminars next Tuesday 19th January from 3.00 - 4.30pm. Speakers in this first seminar will include Prof Emerita (University of Surrey) Marie Breen-Smyth and PhD students Síofra Peeren (King's College London) and Ariana Markowitz (University College London). For more information on the series and details on how to register for this first seminar, please go to this webpage.</p>
 	<p>Credit Union Plus Health Focus Ireland</p> <p>CU Plus have teamed up with Ciara McCormack - Health Focus Ireland to bring to you a 6 Week Stay-At-Home Wellness Programme! The Programme is open to CU members and Non-CU members. The programme is delivered online to allow you stay safe and workout from home and all sessions recorded so you can catch up if you miss any of them! The programme aims to help you begin your journey towards better health and to build long term sustainable habits!</p>

This programme is designed as a steppingstone towards change, aimed to build long term sustainable.

This Year, Make Your Health Your Priority!

How much:

- CU Members - 55 euro
- Non-CU members 65 euro

To book click this link <https://bookinghawk.com/.../6-week-stay-at-home.../5606>

For more information contact Ciara on

- Email info@healthfocusireland.ie
- What's App/Text/Call 085 7526994

What's included?



2 Health & Well-being Webinar (start & end)



6 Online Zoom exercise class (suitable for mixed levels)



6 Different Health Topics Covered – education & tools for action



6 Week online community support (closed Facebook group) & challenges



Join us live on Facebook
Monday 18th
Wednesday 20th
and Friday 22nd

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



Wicklow Art Office | Music Network Instrumental Tuition Residency for 55+

This is a residency set up by Music Network in partnership with Wicklow County Council supported by the Healthy Ireland Keep Well Campaign and Creative Ireland. In December there was an open call for participants aged over 55 years. The participants were to have had some experience of playing a musical instrument in the past and a desire to reconnect with learning and performing as part of the 'switch off and get creative' theme of the Keep Well Campaign. A total of 46 applications were received and 16 were selected, of

the selected participants 12 are women and 4 are men. The four instruments to be taught are Cello, Guitar, Whistle and Keyboard. There is a waiting list also for guitar, whistle and keyboard should

anyone drop out. While lessons were planned for Zoom and in person at Mermaid Arts Centre at the moment due to the level of Covid-19 they will switch to Zoom. As part of the process not only will the participants get the individual tuition but there will be online meet ups with all players in an ensemble fashion and to connect them outside their homes at this time. Pending Covid-19 in the longer term, they will meet in April for a final ensemble session.



Kilkenny's Well Being Campaign launches new initiative 'The Tonic' to support our older generation over the coming months.

Kilkenny's Well Being Campaign have launched a new programme which began on KCLR radio yesterday after the 6 o'clock news. It's called 'The Tonic' and is a mixture of songs and interviews chosen to appeal to the older generation. It's a part of the wide-ranging 'Keep Well' government campaign which aims to support people and communities to mind their physical and mental health over the coming months and is made in collaboration with the Kilkenny Older Person's Council. Presented by John Masterson, the hour-long programme will feature interviews ranging in subject matter from arts, to sport, storytelling, health & wellbeing and personality interviews. It will include features that recall memories and will draw on contributors from all ages and backgrounds with the overall aim that the content serves as a welcome distraction to the often difficult and serious news that dominates the headlines these days.

Speaking in support of the campaign, local hurling legend Eddie Keher “I am delighted to support Kilkenny County Council and their many initiatives to implement the government’s ‘Keep Well’ campaign. As senior citizens we have experienced a lifetime of ‘highs and lows’ and we have shown resilience to survive even in the most difficult of periods. This is a time to shine again and to call on our experiences in life to help us and our neighbours to come through this terrible Pandemic. We are nearly there, so continue to keep regular contact with friends and neighbours. Renew all the old skills and pastimes to keep yourself active and busy. And learn some new ones too! But most of all keep safe and abide by the rules and recommendations set out by the HSE. If we do, and with the vaccine imminent we will be through this in no time”.

To create listener engagement KCLR are encouraging people to text or call the show to share their memories and experiences. “We plan that ‘The Tonic’ will give the listeners a good dose of entertainment and nostalgia by taking trips down memory lane. During these times when older people bear the brunt of Covid -19 restrictions, ‘The Tonic’ will be just that, a welcome invigoration to the week”, says KCLR Producer Monica Hayes. Meanwhile, Betty Dewberry Chair of the Kilkenny Older Person’s Council encourages listeners that ‘The Tonic’ is “A chance to reminisce about bygone days! Tune in every Thursday evening for an hour of welcome distraction from the challenges we are facing every day now.”



Light hearted radio  with John Masterson

ON **KCLR** EVERY THURSDAY 6 - 7PM
UNTIL 1ST OF APRIL 2021

www.kilkennyccoo.ie/emg/Publications/COVID-19-Information/Wellbeing  www.facebook.com/HealthyKilkenny



Broadcasting every Thursday for the next 12 weeks ‘The Tonic’ will be available to listen back on the KCLR website and on all podcast platforms. Cathaoirleach of Kilkenny County Council, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, welcomes the initiative by saying “our older generation have been hugely affected by this pandemic since March last year so any initiative that supports their mental and physical health over the next few months as we get through this very difficult time is to be welcomed and applauded. Congratulations to all involved.”

For further information about the “Keep Well” campaign see gov.ie/healthyireland. ‘Keep Well’ is brought to you with thanks to Healthy Ireland an initiative of the Government of Ireland with funding from the Healthy Ireland Fund and the Sláintecare fund delivered by Pobal.



Fingal HomeFit 2021

Fingal County Council Sports Office are delighted to announce that the Fingal HomeFit Live Sessions will be recommencing in 2021.

Starting Monday 18th January for 4 weeks they will be hosting 3 live



exercise sessions per week. There will be a variety of exercise classes that are open to all levels of fitness.

These free, online classes will take place at 10am (Mon, Wed & Fri) via Zoom and last 30-40 minutes. The classes include Body Mind Movement, Full Body Workout and Chair Exercise.

To register for the new block of classes click on the link below:

<https://forms.gle/BeX1keDkWdgd1my6>

In the meantime, if you would like to catch up on the sessions prior to Christmas click on the link below:

<https://learning.fingal.ie/course/view.php?id=175>

If you have any questions, please contact me at noel.mcmanus@fcrs.ie.

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



IFA Virtual Town Hall | In Conversation With: Dr Ross Upshur Canadian Bioethics Researcher and Professor

The International Federation on Ageing held a Town Hall event earlier today called 'In Conversation with Dr. Ross Upshur, Canadian Bioethics Researcher and Professor'. A recording of this event will be available on the Federation's website <https://ifa.ngo/>



The Case for Investment in Health Prevention and Promotion

As part of a series of four webinars to build global momentum on vaccination within COVID-19, IFA invites you to the second webinar entitled "The Case for Investment in Health Prevention and Promotion" which will be held on 20 January 2021, at 7:00am EST. The webinar aims to improve understanding of the social and economic value and return on investment of adult vaccination, as well as advocate for focused efforts on targeted investment in health prevention and promotion. Register [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

Coronavirus COVID-19

If you have fever and/or cough you should stay at home regardless of your travel or contact history.

If you have returned from an area that is subject to travel restrictions due to COVID-19 you should restrict your movement for 14 days. Check the list of affected areas on [www.usatf.ie](#)

How to Prevent

- Wash** your hands well and scrub for 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing and dispose of the tissue.
- Avoid** touching your nose, eyes, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean** and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stop** shaking hands, hugging, or kissing others.
- Distance** yourself at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people, especially those who might be sick.

All people are advised to:

- > Reduce social interactions
- > **Keep a distance** of 2m between you and other people
- > **Do not** shake hands or make close contact where possible

If you have symptoms visit [hse.ie](#) OR phone HSE Live **1850 24 1850**

Symptoms

- > Fever (High Temperature)
- > A Cough
- > Shortness of Breath
- > Breathing Difficulties

For daily updates visit

[www.gov.ie/health/covid-19](#)
[www.hse.ie](#)

WORLD LEADERS IN COVID-19 TESTING
www.hse.ie/hsc/covid-19

Riailín na Míreanna
Government of Ireland

Useful Contacts

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office Telephone: 046 9097413

Or Email: reavy@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