



Health Promotion Conference 2015

A New Conversation with Men

7 Key Questions worth Reflecting On for Wellbeing & Health

**The Men's Development Network
NUI Galway 18th June 2015**

Welcome to all..

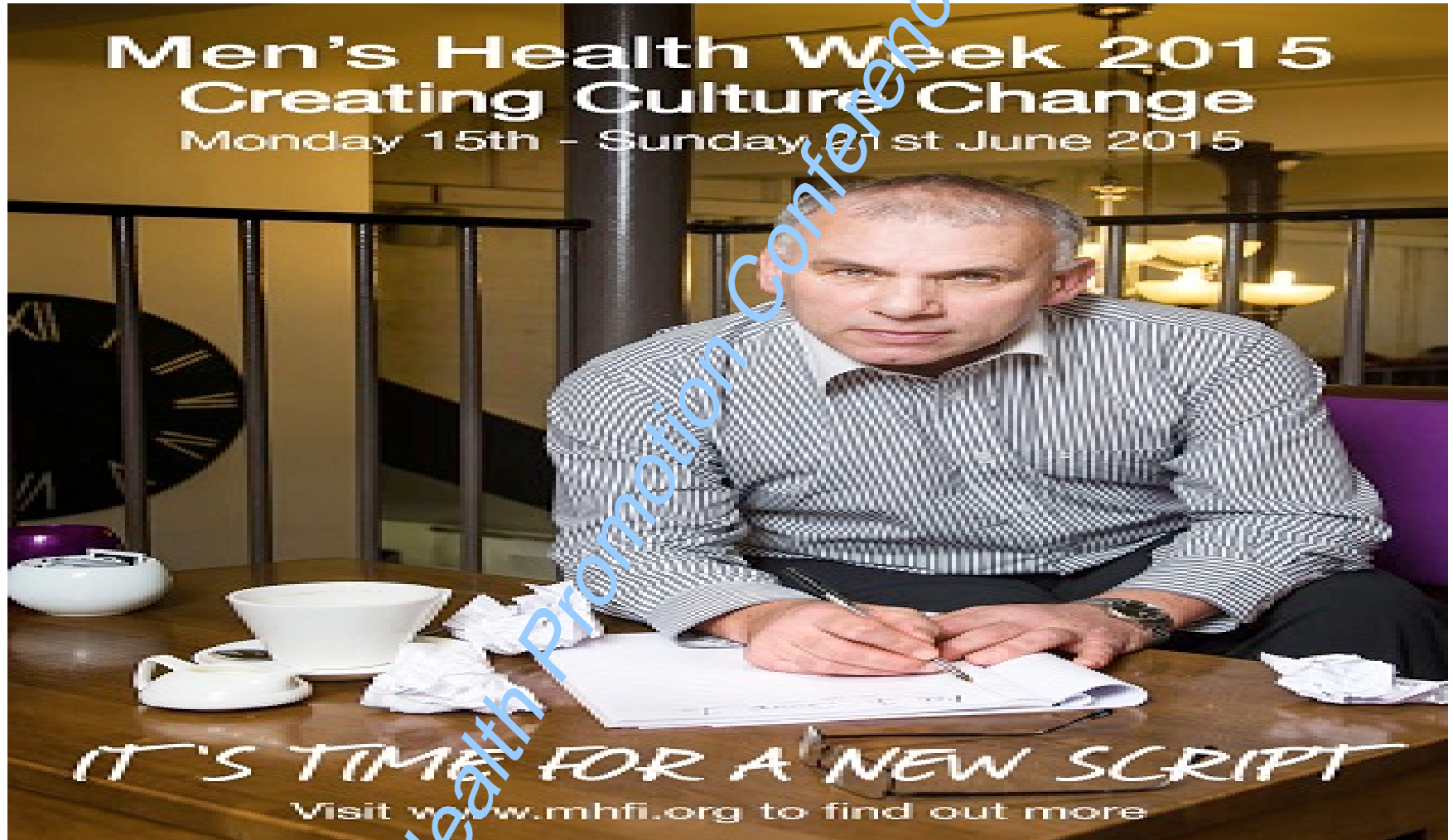
Lorcan Brennan

(Men's Health coordinator)

The Men's Development Network

Health Promotion Conference 2015

Great to be here for Men's Health Week 2015



Men's Health Week 2015
Creating Culture Change
Monday 15th - Sunday 21st June 2015

IT'S TIME FOR A NEW SCRIPT
Visit www.mhfi.org to find out more

Health Promotion Conference 2015

Great to have people on board promoting Men's Health week



GOOD NEWS / BAD NEWS

- **Good News** is there are Information Packs for you with key pieces of information highlighted here.....
- **Bad News** there will be HOMEWORK:
- **IT'S MORE OF A REQUEST.... THAN HOMEWORK**
- **In a quieter moment...** *To reflect on your own life and practice...*
- **PLEASE DO....**
 1. *Reflect on and complete the 7 Key Questions templates provided in your pack towards personal Wellbeing*

Who are MDN/MDHP? (Packs for additional Information)

- The MDN is a developmental and consultative organisation that works locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Our focus has always been on building alliances with the relevant Partners & Agencies
- Our Motto **Better Lives For Men Better Lives for All**
(Wellness)
- *Work is focused on developing methodologies and initiatives for engaging Men and supporting those engaging men, developmentally, conversationally, (nationally).*

Focus of MDN Training.....

- *informed by engaging men and research carried out across FRC CDP to identify needs and challenges in relation to supporting and engaging men with their lives and health. (See in Packs)*
- Findings highlighted a *need for support, resources, information and training*..... This context really informed the MDN Health work across the life of the Men's National Policy through focusing its Service Agreement across work that had a national focus.

MDN's work is underpinned by the Values & Principles of.....

- *Community Development*
- *Health Promotion*
- *and Social determinants approach*
- As highlighted through Engage Men's Health Training MDN believe that reducing socio-economic health inequalities will require interventions that focus on *environments and individuals through a 'whole-of-government', 'whole-of-society'* approach (Engage Unit 1.3)

Social Determinants Approach

- This approach also protects against promoting unreasonable blame culturally onto men in relation to health issues...
- *Changing our personal behaviours for better health and wellbeing is all important but so to is having the political will and guarantee of policies that support positive systemic social change towards better health....*

KEY MDN Health Work / SA

- Informing **Men's Health Policy** both development and implementation,
- **Resource development** for engaging & supporting men,
- 7 Key Questions (**Training & In-service**) across a broad range of groups
- **Engage National Men's Health** Programme Development & Implementation (Training)
- **Men's Health Week** Planning & Implementation,
- **Social Personal & Health Education** (Training),
- **Engaging Young Men Training**, (June 2015)
 - National Training & Development Summer School...
 - 7 Key Questions emerged organically through engaging men developmentally through this and other group settings

- **A New Conversation for Men**
- **Engaging Men Developmentally**
 - **7 Key Questions**

7 Key Questions / Organic Development (Engage National Men's Health Training UNIT 5)

- **MDN have been hosting Annual National Men's Training and Development Summer School for over 17 years.**
- *Across those years we have provided a forum for hundreds of men to sit in circles of safety and support engaging in conversations about their lives*
- *Reflecting on their joys and challenges and with new found support planning and implementing incremental actions for positive change*
- **MDN Reflecting annually on those gatherings, feedback & evaluations highlighted that 7 Key questions were at the heart of the success and support of those events**

Seven Questions for a New Conversation with Men

What Are The 7 Key Questions

Seven Questions for a New Conversation

Best Practice For Engaging Men Developmentally

Question 1: How are things?

Question 2: What's going well?

Question 3: What's not going well?

Question 4: Is there anything you need to do?

Question 5: Is there any support you need?

Question 6: What's one step you might take?

Question 7: What difference might it make?

New Conversations for Men

THE MEN'S DEVELOPMENT NETWORK 7 KEY QUESTIONS



Men's Development Network's 7 Key Questions Worksheet

REFLECTION			IDENTIFYING NEEDS		TAKING ACTION	
How are things?	What's going well?	What's not going well?	Is there anything you need to do?	Is there any support you need?	What's one step you might take?	What difference might it make?

Strengths of 7 Key Questions

- -**wellness model (salutagenic)** begins with what's going well..
- - helps to connect with and **reflect connect with personal experience (promotes autonomy)**
- -helps us **identify our needs and resources** we might need
- - focused on **incremental actions** for wellbeing
- - **Solution based reflection** on our experience
- -Focused on **normalising / conversationalising** Men's Lives not waiting for crisis.....

How the 7 Key Questions can be used?

- *Resource for personal reflection,*
- *One to one conversations,*
- *Groups (SS) work conversations,*
- ***Planning tool needs audit
(Community Training)***
- ***SUPPORT TOOL FOR ENGAGING
SUPPORTING MEN DEVELOPMENTALLY***

Why Developmentally?

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MDN's Experience that

Working Developmentally (Groups)

Can create a Safe and Supportive Environment

- A safe and supportive space where men can talk freely, share experiences, and grow in confidence.
- A place for men to meet, find support, and enjoy each other's company.

Men's Development Network

More Clearly ...

- A safe, supportive and confidential *space where men, through sharing and listening, can become more aware of how some of the messages we pick up as boys about becoming men can impact negatively on our lives and health (gender conditioning).*
- A place to begin addressing such conditioning towards living, more intentionally, a better quality of life.

“Better lives for men, better lives for all” (MDN)

Gendered Messages

- Don't talk
- Don't cry
- Don't complain
- Soldier on
- Don't show fear
- Minimise loss
- Stand up for yourself
- Don't show emotion
- Be tough
- Defend
- Drink alcohol
- Hold your drink

The Effects of Conditioning and Undoing Conditioning Developmentally

Effects of Conditioning

- Won't realise under stress
- Services not for us
- Late referral to GP
- Find it hard to seek help
- Difficulty sharing
- Acquaintances, but few friends
- Prone to isolation
- Prone to developing unhelpful coping mechanisms

Undoing Conditioning Developmentally

Supports men through conversation

- Breaking isolation through contact
- Being listened to
- Feeling included
- Expressing vulnerability with support
- Developing clearer thinking
- Feeling valued
- Feeling respected and loved
- Age and experience being valued
- Increased understanding
- Trying new experiences that are not stereotypical and are life-enhancing
- Reconnecting with ourselves, our families, our communities, society, the world

A New Conversation With Men

This approach to Engaging Men

- Works to create a safe and confidential space for men to deepen friendships and develop networks
- Explores how messages we pick up as boys influence us
- Share significant parts of our life & health story
- Identify key health issues and resources
- Breaks isolation, learn to connect, name and sit with feelings
- Learn and practice a language of feeling
- Practice appropriate expression of feelings
- Act on issues with support and referral (e.g. GP and others)
 - *Encourage modelling changed behaviour*

The Benefits of Belonging to a Men's Development Group

What Men Have Said ...

- **Isolation is broken through contact**
- **Feeling empowered to develop** clearer thinking
- **Feeling valued**
- **Being listened to**
- Feeling included
- **Age and experience valued**
- Acceptance of responsibilities
- Accepting support and giving support
- Developing relationships
- **Ability to try new beneficial experiences**
- Increased self-esteem
- Increased self-efficacy
- Kind, respectful, helpful, encouraging, loving, nurturing and compassionate
- Mentoring to our young and our peers
- Careful of our own and other's safety
- **Able to talk, able to listen**
- **Able to ask for help**
- **Wise enough to go to the doctor when we feel a pain or to check out a change**
- Willing to say sorry when we are wrong
- **Gentle with ourselves**
- **Able to give support and get support**
- **Free to express ourselves considerably and appropriately**
- **Able to rest / connect with joy**
- **Able to enjoy life**

Men's Development Network (MDN)

MDN GUIDELINES FOR THE WORK

Creating Group Safety

- Men's development groups are confidential.
- Participate at your own pace.
- Be aware that each man has equal time.
- Only speak again when each man has spoken once.
- Remember that there is a difference between thinking and feeling.
- Ask men to be mindful of taking care of themselves.
- You may say things that you normally wouldn't say, and it may make you feel vulnerable.
- The meetings are not about your issue being paramount, but are about clearing out unnecessary feelings.
- Each man is encouraged to understand and respect 'difference'.
- Do not ask someone to do something you haven't done yourself.

What MEN have said Engaging Developmentally...

- *We spoke about some different things in a way you wouldn't normally talk about them.*
- *Looked at things we never looked at before - boldly went where no man went before.*
- *Somewhere to come, be relaxed about what was going on in our lives, and actually talk about it rather than ignoring it.*
- *Level of openness and trust helped us relax and come and talk to people and be yourself, and there was no need to put on an exterior.*
- *Try to use it everyday - to be myself - and it makes me a happier person.*
- *Laughing a lot more got in touch with that - that's one feeling I got in touch with. Made me think about expressing other feelings.*
- *Learnt not to talk. This was a big benefit. It removed the anxiety of thinking I had to talk.*
- *Learnt to listen better.*

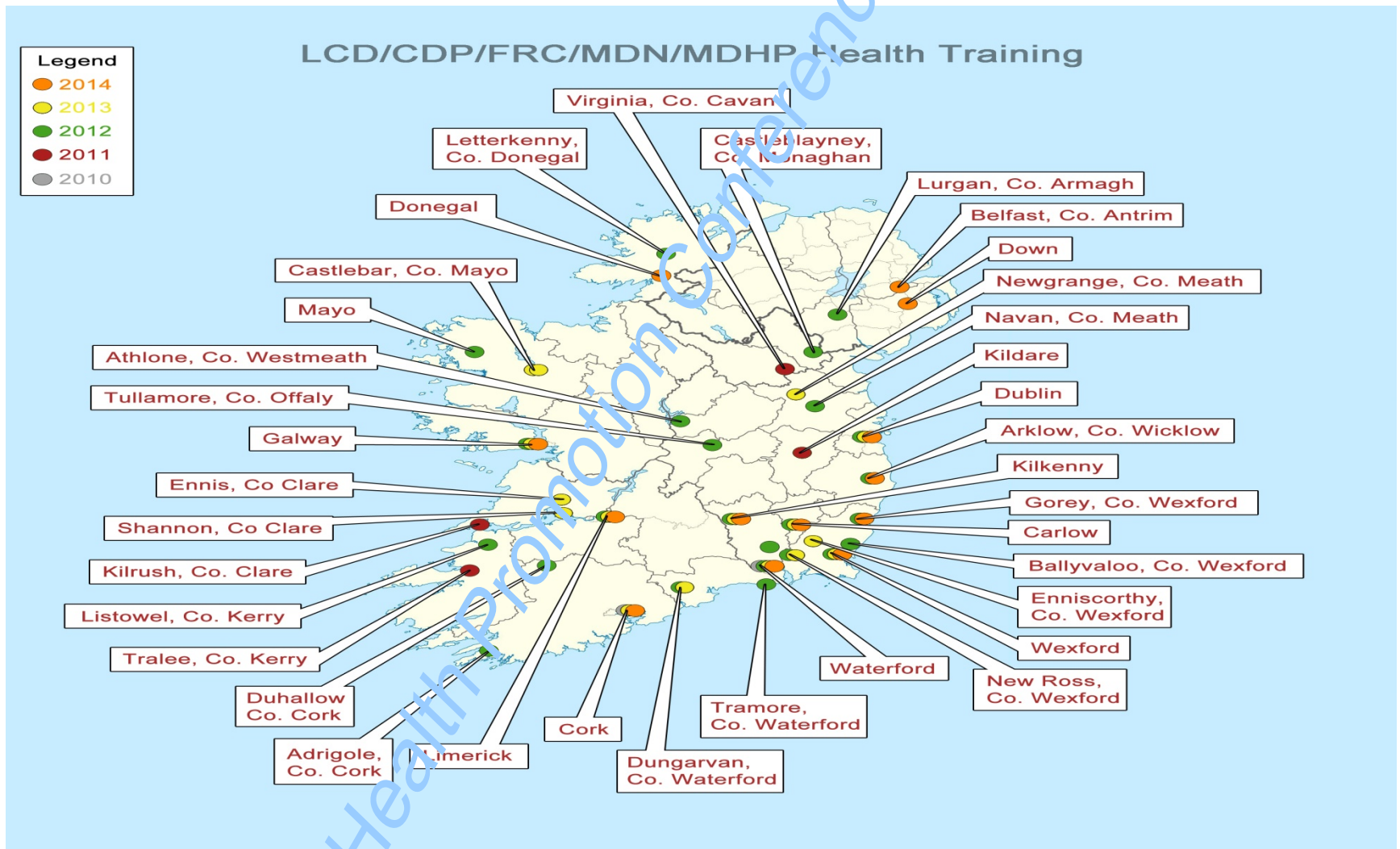
**In Relation to 7 Key Questions
as a Training Resource &
Training Nationally
MDN have been out and
about....**

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In Relation to Training Nationally

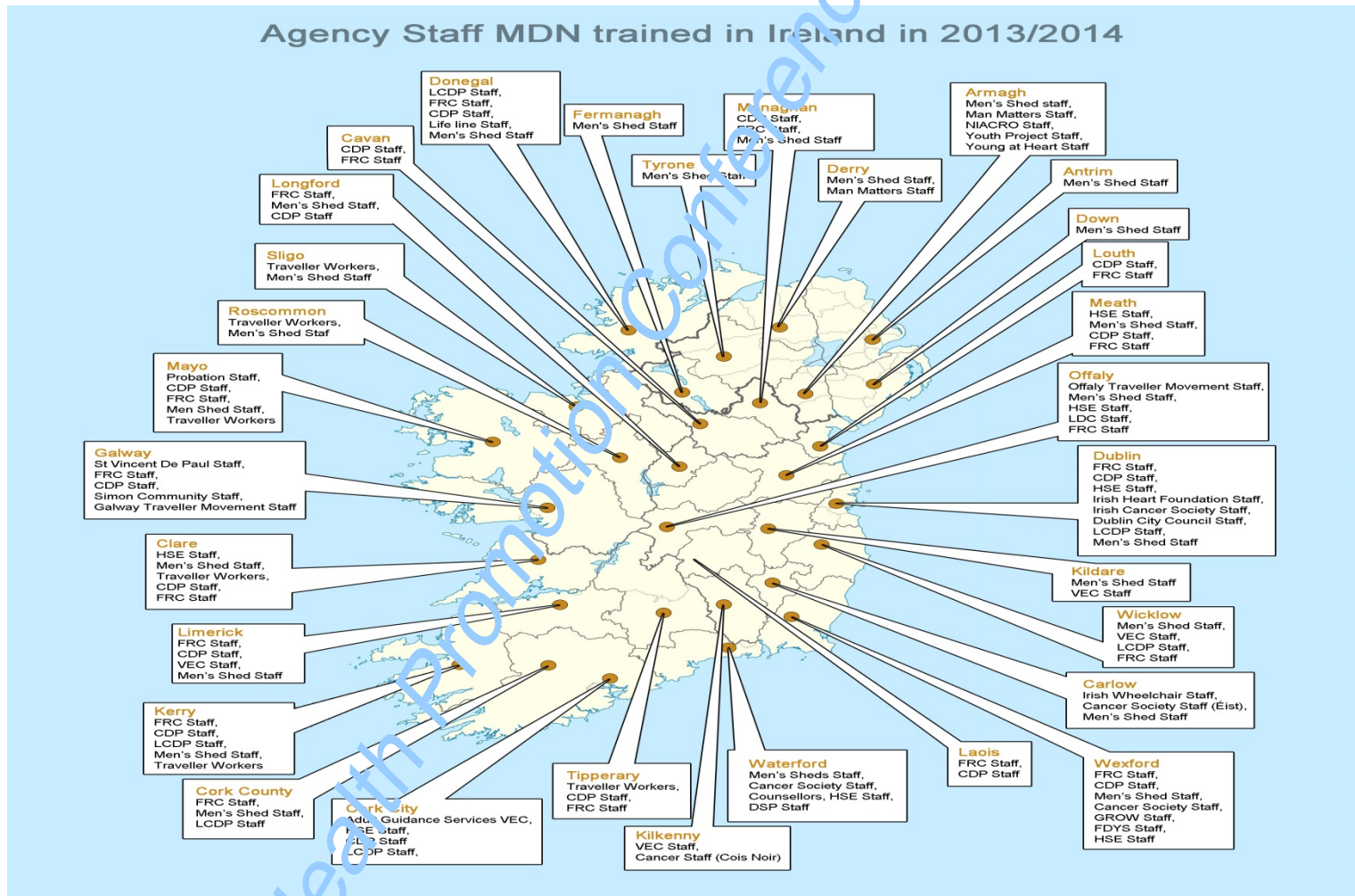
- **Agency Staff ,
Management &
Volunteers included...**
- *Community
Development Projects*
- *Family Resource Centres*
- *Cancer Services*
- *Men's Sheds*
- *Men's Groups*
- *Cc. Councils*
- *County Partnerships*
- *Occupational therapists*
- *Local Development
Boards*
- *HSE staff*
- *VEC staff*
- *Primary Health staff*
- *Others...*

SNAPSHOT In relation to dissemination....



Examples of Agency Staff Training

Agency Staff MDN trained in Ireland in 2013/2014



**Some of the Challenges
& Supports needed
Highlighted through Training**

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Snapshot 1: Some of the Challenges on the ground identified by those engaging with our National Training:

- *Getting men involved with projects*
- *Shortage of men getting involved/staying involved*
- *Men afraid to show any kind of weakness -loss of identity, self worth and role in society*
- *Leadership is a challenge getting men in*
- *Funding is a challenge*
- *Not enough training opportunities for Men*
- *Perception some services are not welcoming for men*
- *Difficulty of persuading men to become involved in community work*
- *Frustration at gender stereotyping and effects*

Snapshot 2: Supports Needed were identified as the Following:

- *Network with other Men's groups to share ideas*
- *Funding/ research into getting different kinds*
- *More Resources*
- *Structure of engagement*
- *Putting value on what you are doing*
- *Achievable tasks (small steps)*
- *Positive thinking/language/humour*
- *open-mindedness/empathy*
- *More Space*
- *More male tutors*
- *More Networking*
- *Hooks / Ideas / Projects*

What participants said about the 7 Key Q Training (Flyer in Pack)

- “Very well delivered and enlightening. Insights into the needs of men in general and the different ways in developing men’s wellbeing”
- “Was very good, given in great detail some very good information, liked listening to what other people had to say”.
- “Very informative, well delivered and a good strong welcome”
- “I found it very interesting and with lots of good information. I liked the small group work and the way we shared a lot of information came from that”.
- Very good, I liked the style and delivery of the course”.
- Excellent insight into what the issues are, I liked the freshness and non complicated delivery”.
- “Very good a chance to revisit and explore ideas around the why of working with men”.

What participants said about the 7 Key Q Training

- **Very enlightening, I liked the interaction”.**
- **“Eye opener. How much as a man I find it difficult to talk about certain things just because I feel men don’t cry. I liked the health care, men’s health input”.**
- **“Training was very informative. It also made me see things from a different point of view. Really liked the group exercises.”**
- **“Great. So informed, open and friendly. Really enjoyed the openness to talk”.**
- **“Very informative. The facilitators worked very well together and with the group”.**
- **“Great. More aware of the issues dealing with men’s health.**

- ***TRAINING STILL AVAILABLE CONTACT US at MDN***

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New Conversations for Men

THE MEN'S DEVELOPMENT NETWORK 7 KEY QUESTIONS



Where to from here.....

- *MDN will continue to promote New Conversations with and for men through all our work*
- *Continue to build and strengthen working alliances with services and agencies to promote better wellbeing and health*
- *Develop further training, initiatives, resources and programmes towards best practice for engaging men and young men with their wellbeing and health*
- *Continue to raise awareness of the **7 Key Questions** as a resource for reflection towards positive actions for wellbeing and health*

INFORMATION PACKS FOR YOU

Key Wellbeing & Health Information



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OVER TO YOU

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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