



Stay at home, stay safe, stay well and stay occupied.

Dr Diarmuid O'Shea

(Consultant Geriatrician at St Vincent's University Hospital in Dublin, Registrar of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland, and current President of The Irish Gerontological Society of Ireland)

When the Olympic Games was deferred to 2021, it added to a list of major sporting events that were cancelled or postponed. I have always wondered if it is true that we learn life's lessons more cheaply through sport, but that's an argument for another day! The deferral of the Olympic games is another example, if we needed one, of how seriously the world we live in today is treating the pandemic of COVID-19 around the world. We are putting lives before livelihoods. The lived experience of life tells us tough times don't last; tough people do. Coming through the ups and downs of life adds experience and resilience. This pandemic will pass and when it does, we will all emerge from our cocoon into a reformed world. Our challenge will be to put the good that emerges, and the lessons learnt to good use.

You are part of the Army

It is of course understandable that we are all worried and concerned about COVID-19. How we turn that concern and worry into a positive action is a challenge for us all. We are working together across the community and health care sectors in ways we would never have imagined possible 4 weeks ago. There are two major battle fronts – healthcare and the community.

[Click here to read Dr O'Shea's full message](#)

National Updates



1,169 nurses have joined the Nursing and Midwifery Register to fight Covid-19. 385 are newly registered, while 784 have been restored to the register. The number of registered active nurses has now passed **78,000** for the first time. Emergency measures to fight the virus means previous registrants can be restored without paying any fees.

	<p>Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection Income Support Helpline is open 9am to 5pm: 1890-800-024</p> <p>You can use http://MyWelfare.ie to quickly & easily apply for a range of #Covid19 income supports</p> <p>See latest guidance & FAQs here</p> <p>Revised Intreo opening hours here</p>
 <p>Credit Union</p>	<p>Age Friendly Ireland are delighted to work with The Irish League of Credit Unions to let you know that if you are cocooning at home or are unable to visit the credit union, your credit union is still there for you. If you need to contact them about your credit union account they are asking you to phone or email your credit union in the first instance. Although these contact points may be busy, credit union personnel are doing everything possible to answer your call and return emails in a timely manner. See information leaflet here.</p> <p>You can find your credit union contact details here, with more information and answers to frequently asked questions here</p>
 <p>National Lottery</p>	<p>Unclaimed Lotto funds are being released straightaway to help battle Coronavirus. €16million will see its way towards the frontline as the country ramps-up its response to COVID 19. The money will go directly to the health sector. Over €5.5billion has been raised for use by good causes since the National Lottery commenced operations in 1987.</p>
	<p>Property website daft.ie is helping to make accommodation available for free for doctors and nurses who are on the frontline in tackling the Covid-19 pandemic. In a statement, the company said <i>"This free short-term housing can help ease our doctors and nurses concerns of sharing a home with their families or housemates while giving them the safe and secure space they need to replenish their energy on their breaks from duty."</i> It said that it was still working through the details but expect it to be live on www.daft.ie by next week. See more here</p>



The Irish Men's Sheds Association (IMSA), the representative body for men's sheds in Ireland, has launched an island-wide campaign **#CallThemForACuppa** calling on men's sheds and the public to pick up the phone and call someone at risk of social isolation. While all men's sheds across Ireland are temporarily closed, they continue to connect with one another through alternative means such as checking in through phone, text and WhatsApp. The sheds are also operating a 'buddy system', whereby one member is responsible for checking in with another, ensuring that shedders are not isolated during this difficult time. See more [here](#)



With all this spare time on our hands at the minute why not enter the **RTÉ Short Story Competition 2020**. RTÉ is currently accepting short story submissions for one of Ireland's longest established and most significant literary prizes, the RTÉ Short Story Competition in honour of Francis MacManus. Writers have until Friday 8th May to submit their short story which will be judged by a panel of three judges. For more info and details of what you could win see [here](#)

Local Updates



A rural local development company in **Cavan** is hoping a food bank initiative will be rolled out across the country. A programme operating at **St Bricin's College in Belturbet** which helps disadvantaged families has been taken over and expanded to other towns in the county. Local food producers have come on board, as well as Tesco, which has been working with St Bricin's as part of the food cloud initiative. Mary Sheridan, Principal of St Bricin's College, said that when the school closed, they decided to donate the food to other people in need. The Civil Defence and the Gardai are involved and are delivering food hampers to hard-pressed families and older people who are now cocooning. Eight food hubs have now been set up across Cavan and more are expected to come on stream.

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!

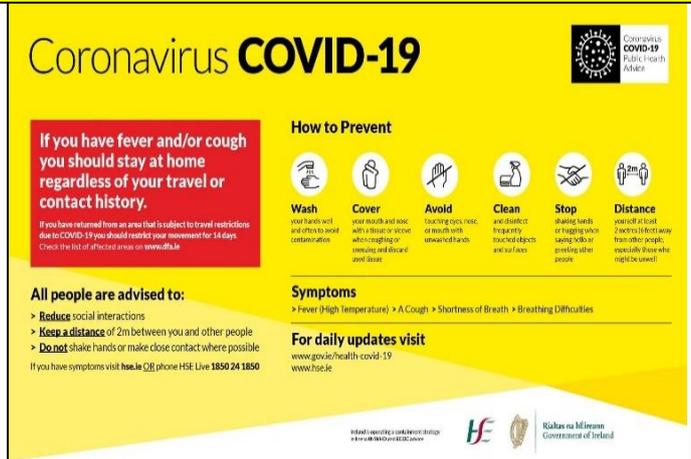
International Updates

 <p>World Health Organization</p>	<p>Age Friendly Ireland are delighted that Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe referred to some of Ireland's Age Friendly Practices in his online press briefing yesterday on COVID-19 and the health and well-being of older people. The full briefing is available here</p>
 <p>An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade</p>	<p>Ireland has provided €10 million in funding to the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan, which aims to help particularly vulnerable countries in their fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. Announcing Ireland's contribution, Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney said, "<i>Humanity has a common enemy, which we can only defeat if we work together – as the World Health Organization's Mike Ryan says: 'None of us are safe until everyone is safe.'</i>" See more here</p>
	<p>Country music star Dolly Parton is donating 1 million US dollars to help fund coronavirus research. The 9 To 5 singer, actress and philanthropist tweeted that she is donating the funds to Vanderbilt University Medical Centre in Nashville, Tennessee for coronavirus research. The 74-year-old is also working with her charity, The Imagination Library, to read a children's book on YouTube every Thursday for 10 weeks. See more here</p>

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

How to Prevent

- Wash**: Wash hands well and often to avoid contamination.
- Cover**: Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing and dispose and reuse.
- Avoid**: Touching eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean**: Avoid contact frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stop**: Shaking hands or hugging when staying in close proximity to other people.
- Distance**: Stay at least 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people, especially those who might be unwell.

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

Minister for Health: Simon Harris TD
Minister for Children, Equality, Disability and Integration: Leo Flanagan TD
Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment: Richard Bruton TD
Minister for Education: Norma Foley TD
Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine: Michael Ring MD
Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications: Eamon Ryan TD
Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport: Leo Flanagan TD
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**Riann na Míreann
Government of Ireland**

Useful Contacts

Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office T: 046 9097413 E: rleavy@meathcoco.ie

HSE Advice Line: Callsave 1850 24 1850

Call from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 5pm Saturday and Sunday