



**Welcome to Age Friendly Ireland's Daily COVID-19 Newsletter**

Dear colleagues,

I hope you are all keeping well through this very challenging period. Thank you to all of you who have been linking with us so closely in terms of your local responses to the Covid-19 public health crisis. In an attempt to reduce the volume of email traffic, and in terms of communicating regular updates plus developments, we have agreed that it is best to send a single daily newsletter with information particularly in relation to up to date and valid national information, new measures and examples of good practice.

We will also ensure that we are maintaining the opportunity to hear national issues and challenges from members of our Older People's Councils and Age Friendly Programme Managers, as they emerge throughout the phase of physical distancing, self-quarantining, self-isolating and cocooning. In keeping with the ethos of our programme, and based on our decade of work in Ireland, at both local and national level we will continue to work with all our stakeholders and partners across all sectors to ensure that the voice of our ageing population is heard so that we can be responsive.

A sincere thanks to all of you across our age friendly family in Ireland. Stay safe.






**Catherine McGuigan**  
Chief Officer, Age Friendly Ireland

National Updates



**An Post have introduced extended opening hours** and have worked with Department of Social Protection to introduce emergency "Temporary Agents" who can collect pensions on behalf of those who are self-quarantining or self-isolating. The government has arranged for people to receive their payments every fortnight, instead of weekly, so you can reduce the number of trips to the Post Office

A COVID-19 Public Information booklet is to be delivered to every home in the country. The guide will explain the symptoms of coronavirus and how people should self-isolate if they suspect they have been infected with the deadly bug. It will also offer information about how the Government is responding to the crisis.

	<p><b>An Garda Siochana</b> have deployed 200 contingency vehicles to enable community police officers to deliver provisions to older people and check up on those who are most isolated and don't have a support structure in place. They have also accelerated the vetting process to ensure volunteers can be processed to enable them to volunteer at local level especially with essentials like meals on wheels and others.</p>
	<p><b>How people are assessed for coronavirus tests</b> changed on 25 March. Find out about these changes and how people are now assessed on <a href="#">this page (HSE Website)</a></p>
	<p><b>Physical distancing works</b> Dr Holohan, Chief Medical officer, Department of Health disclosed that analysis of public health contact tracing has shown that the average number of close contacts per confirmed case has decreased from more than 20 to the somewhere in the region of five contacts. This indicated that the public is generally adhering to social distancing advice and limiting the number of people they are in contact with.</p>
	<p><b>Local Libraries:</b> Whilst Libraries have closed their doors to the public, they are working very closely to provide online services digitally which ensures a safe way to access eBooks, audiobooks, digital newspapers and magazines which is particularly beneficial to older people.</p>
	<p><b>Staying Active:</b> A huge volume of physical activity programmes are moving from gym-based classes to home based classes and delivering them to older people through Facebook, Youtube and other online platforms. It is important for older people to try to remain physically active. See online classes; <a href="#">ExWell @ Home</a>; <a href="#">Age &amp; Opportunity</a> and <a href="#">Siel Bleu</a></p>

## Local Updates

	<p><b>Coronavirus helpline sees surge in older callers:</b> At local level sporting clubs, community groups and others are telephoning local older people regularly, collecting their shopping and dropping them at the doors. This daily check in has been an invaluable support to thousands across Ireland</p>
	<p><b>Chefs in Donegal</b> have come together with an idea which they believe could be replicated easily in other towns. Chefs, whose restaurants were closed in Donegal, have set up a kitchen in a former restaurant to prepare free meals every day to deliver to older people and other compromised people in the area.</p>
	<p><b>GAA Response:</b> Communities across Ireland are rallying to support more vulnerable people who are concerned and worried about Covid-19. Dunderry GAA club in Co Meath has decided to launch a scheme to help older people in the parish. People can ring the local shop in the heart of the village and place an order for supplies. Members of the club who are operating a roster will then collect it from the shop and drop the order off at the door, maintaining minimal contact with members of the public to reduce the spread of the infection.</p>

## 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](mailto:rleavy@meathcoco.ie) Information is one thing we can share right now!

## International Updates



WHO Global Network  
for Age-friendly Cities  
and Communities

**Age-friendly innovations in the time of coronavirus:** The World Health Organisation (WHO) is working on developing community guidance which they will share when completed.

Through our Age Friendly Global Network, and as a valued affiliate member, we are working on collating innovative responses in partnership with other countries around the world to COVID-19 so that we can share and learn from each other.



**Some innovative examples from Spain:**

Neighbourhood and community networks are emerging to help older people who live alone to do their shopping, collect their prescriptions, etc.

The Ministry of Social Rights and 2030 Agenda together with Imserso has prepared a Technical Document of Recommendations for action from the Social Services of Home Care.

Fundación Matia has developed two infographics with guidelines for people with older relatives who live alone, and also for Caregivers who are caring for someone with Alzheimer's at home.

Supermarkets prioritize care for the elderly and vulnerable groups with special checkout to pay, to avoid waiting.

## Useful Contacts

**Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office**

T: 046 9097413 E: [rleavy@meathcoco.ie](mailto:rleavy@meathcoco.ie)

**HSE Advice Line:**

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

**Callsave 1850 24 1850**

