

**National Updates**

**A New Year message from Kitty Hughes, Chairperson of National Network of Older People's Councils**



We send warmest good wishes for a very happy and healthy New Year to all. If we have one wish for NNOPC in 2022 it is that we can all meet again in person and I hope we will realise this at our National Convention in May.

We have achieved many goals to date but we 'have miles to go' with our plans for a better world in which to grow old. We have made wonderful inroads already in voicing the views and concerns of the older person not only at home and nationally but indeed worldwide.

It is an exciting year ahead and with your dedication and enthusiasm along with Catherine and all at AFI together we can move mountains in 2022.

Ar aghaidh linn le chéile.

**Kitty Hughes, Chairperson of the National Network of Older People's Councils**

**Webinar 3 Update – Social Participation**

Following feedback from online delegates, we have been asked to defer January's webinar due to holidays, annual leave and planning preparation. It will be reassigned to a July session date which will be announced closer to the time.

Our next webinar will take place on 8<sup>th</sup> February on Respect & Social Inclusion.

**HSE Partner Pack**



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Government of Ireland

**Our highlight communications updates for you from this week are:**

**Getting tested for COVID-19:** From January 3<sup>rd</sup> people who have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), and are aged 4 to 39 should use antigen tests in the first place. You can book free antigen tests online from the HSE. You also need to self-isolate (stay in your room). There is a high risk you could spread the virus. If you have a positive antigen test, you should then book a PCR test from the HSE to confirm the result.



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This advice does not apply to people who have higher risk health conditions or healthcare workers. Read more about testing for COVID-19 here <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/testing/get-tested/>

**COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 5-11:** COVID-19 vaccine registration is now open for children aged 5-11. A parent or legal guardian will need to give consent for their child to get a COVID-19 vaccine. To register and give consent, visit our website: <http://vaccine.hse.ie/cohort/> 5 to 11 year olds will be offered a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine with a smaller dose. The immunity they get will be similar to the higher dose vaccine used in older age groups. Children in this age group cannot get vaccinated at a walk-in vaccination clinic or pharmacy.

**COVID-19 vaccine booster:** People aged 16 and older can now get a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose.

If you are 30 or older, there are 4 ways to get your booster dose:

- [book an appointment at a vaccination centre](#)
- [book an appointment with a participating pharmacy](#)
- go to a [walk-in booster clinic](#) for your age group
- wait for your appointment to get a booster at a vaccination centre - we will send you a text message, you do not need to register

If you are aged 16 to 29, you can:

- [book a vaccination centre appointment](#) at a clinic for your age group
- book an appointment with a [participating pharmacy](#)

You may also be able to get your booster from your GP.

**Online self-scheduler for COVID-19 booster vaccine:** People can now book their own booster appointments online at many vaccination centres through the HSE website [here.](#)

You need to wait at least 3 months (90 days) after your vaccine course before you can get a vaccine. If you have had COVID-19 since you were vaccinated you should get your booster dose at least 3 months after your positive result.

[You can read the full weekly update by clicking here.](#)



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## RSVP Campaign



Ask yourself the questions overleaf and assess your level of risk or visit [gov.ie/riskaware](http://gov.ie/riskaware)



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## **RISK**

### **Am I vaccinated / have I received my booster?**

Being vaccinated offers good protection against severe illness and hospitalisation and lowers the risk to you and others.

### **Am I more vulnerable than others?**

Activities involving meeting others is higher risk so you need to take steps to protect yourself.

### **Will I be there longer than 2 hours?**

The shorter the duration of an activity, the lower the risk.

### **Will the event be indoors?**

Indoor activity is riskier than outdoor activity.

### **If the activity is indoors, will there be adequate ventilation?**

Let fresh air in to reduce the risk of COVID-19.

## **SYMPTOMS**

### **Do I have symptoms that could be associated with COVID-19?**

If you are displaying any symptoms, you should stay at home and arrange a PCR test – do not go out.

### **Does anyone I'm meeting have symptoms that could be associated with COVID-19?**

Feel comfortable asking the people you are meeting if they have symptoms and if they do, advise them to stay at home and book a PCR test.

## **VENUE**

### **Can I keep a safe distance from others?**

By keeping your distance from others, you can reduce your risk – be aware that this maybe more difficult in some places.

### **Will the venue be crowded?**

Avoiding crowded places will reduce the risk associated with an activity.

### **Will I/we wear masks?**

Wearing masks reduces the risk for everyone.

### **Is it a well-managed premise?**

If a venue is not following public health guidance, including checking your vaccine pass, there may be a higher risk. You should take your business elsewhere.

## **PEOPLE**

### **How many people am I meeting?**

The more people you meet, the greater the risk.

### **How many households are meeting up?**

Getting together with your own household is lower risk. The more households you meet with, the greater the risk.

### **Am I meeting vulnerable people?**

You should take particular care if you are meeting with vulnerable people. You should take

steps to protect them such as wearing a mask or taking an antigen test before meeting them.

**Are the people I am meeting vaccinated / have they received their booster?**

Being vaccinated offers good protection against severe illness and hospitalisation and lowers the risk to you and others.




Time to Reflect is our invitation to the people of Ireland to share their views and their experiences of death, loss and grief during the pandemic. In the 2 weeks since we launched the survey, over 1,000 people have taken part and the stories and experiences people have shared have confirmed that this survey is really important.

Thus far, **only 5% of the people who have taken part have been older people aged over 65.** Needless to say, we very much want to ensure, that the survey includes the experiences of all age groups but particularly older people who we know have been particularly impacted by death and bereavement during the pandemic.

**Time to Reflect**  
a survey about life, death and bereavement during a pandemic



To take part go to:  
[www.hospicefoundation.ie/timetorelectsurvey](http://www.hospicefoundation.ie/timetorelectsurvey)



We are **asking for your help and support in completing the survey.** The survey can be accessed online at:  
[www.hospicefoundation.ie/timetorelectsurvey](http://www.hospicefoundation.ie/timetorelectsurvey)



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland

**New Electricity Costs Emergency Benefit Scheme**

A €210 million Scheme has been approved by Cabinet to credit all domestic electricity customers with €100 in 2022. Approximately 2.1 million account holders will benefit from the scheme with a one-off, exceptional payment to their electricity accounts. This is one of a range of measures being taken to mitigate the impact of rising energy costs.

The scheme will apply to all domestic accounts, including pay as you go customers. The exact mechanism of how the payment will be applied is

currently being finalised and will be announced in Q1 2022. However, it will be automatic and will apply to all customers, people will not need to apply for it.

You can read more [here on gov.ie](#).



### Irish Hospice Foundation Grief Café

People visit the cafe to chat, to draw, to listen to poetry, exploring sadness in a gentle, creative way

The Irish Hospice Foundation has collaborated with artists around the country to set up creative spaces for those struggling with loss during the pandemic.



Now a venue in Galway is running a weekly drop-in centre over the coming months to allow people explore their feelings in a safe environment.

Nestling on Druid Lane in Galway City, there is a new restaurant called Ean. Every Monday, the space is transformed into The Grief Cafe.

The Irish Hospice Foundation says that during the toughest of times the arts can comfort people and help them make sense of loss.

You can [read the full article here](#).



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## HSE Stress Control Programme



**HEALTH & WELLBEING/HEALTH PROMOTION**

DUBLIN SOUTH, KILDARE & WEST WICKLOW

invites you to participate in a free online

## Stress Control Programme

Delivered by Dr Jim White, Consultant Clinical Psychologist

All of our lives are being impacted by Covid 19. It's normal to feel worried or stressed but there are things we can do to mind our mental health.

HSE are streaming Stress Control classes free-of-charge.

The next programme will start on **Monday 3rd January 2022.**

There are 6 sessions, each session lasts approximately 90 minutes.

Each session will be available to watch during the times below.

**Session 1** Monday 3rd January, 9am until Thursday 6th January, 8am

**Session 2** Thursday 6th January, 9am until Monday 10th January, 8am

**Session 3** Monday 10th January, 9am until Thursday 13th January, 8am

**Session 4** Thursday 13th January, 9am until Monday 17th January, 8am

**Session 5** Monday 17th January, 9am until Thursday 20th January, 8am

**Session 6** Thursday 20th January, 9am until Monday 24th January, 8am

Watch the sessions, read the booklets and try out some of the breathing and mindfulness exercises. Friends and family can join in too.

There is no registration required.



Everything you need can be found at

[www.stresscontrol.ie](http://www.stresscontrol.ie)



Connecting for Life



## Hands on SHAFE Technology Webinar

**Reminder to book in for the webinar that is taking place on Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> January**

The ERASMUS+ **Hands-on SHAFE** project is developing online learning materials to facilitate independent living. Register (for free!) and join at 2pm on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January for a webinar where they show examples of the materials that they have developed so far and ask for your feedback. They would also like to get your guidance on the next round of materials which they will develop in 2022.



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County and City Management Association

They are developing materials under four headings:

- **SHAFE General:** Introduces the idea of Smart Healthy Age Friendly Environments (SHAFE) and covers some general topics about active and healthy ageing.
- **Healthy:** Describes ways in which health and wellness can help us to live an active and healthy and independent life.
- **Built:** Focuses on how homes and outside environments can be adapted to make them more liveable as we age.
- **Smart:** Considers how mobile technology and smart home devices can assist with staying healthy, connected and with living independently.

**You can register for the webinar using this link.**

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/hands-on-shafe-learning-materials-review-webinar-tickets-224144049887>



## Dr Michael Ryan honoured with the Presidential Distinguished Service Award

Dr Michael Ryan of the World Health Organization has been honoured with the Presidential Distinguished Service Award by President Michael D Higgins.

The Irish doctor, who is Executive Director of the WHO's Health Emergencies Programme, has become a familiar face in the pandemic as he regularly heads Covid-19 press briefings.

Presidential Distinguished Service Awards are presented every year in recognition of the contribution made by the Irish diaspora.

At their meeting, Dr Ryan briefed President Higgins on the WHO's work to date to combat Covid-19, including the challenges posed by the ongoing Omicron wave.

You can [read the full article here.](#)



## Care and Repair

**AgeAction**  
Age Equality

Age Action's Care and Repair does small DIY jobs, free of charge, for older people to help them maintain their homes and their independence.

Can We  
Help?



If you require work done in your home to make it safer after a stay in hospital we can help.

If you are a professional working with older people who would benefit from this service you can download a referral form from [www.ageaction.ie](http://www.ageaction.ie).

Get in touch to find out how Age Action's Care and Repair can help:

Age Action national line: 0818 911 109

Age Action in Dublin: 01 4756989

Age Action in Cork: 021 2067399

Age Action in Galway: 091 527831

Email: [careandrepair@ageaction.ie](mailto:careandrepair@ageaction.ie)

**AgeAction**  
Age Equality

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**CCMA**  
Cumann Lucht Bainistíochta Contae agus Cathrach  
County and City Management Association

**Reminder:**  
**We'll be back live on**  
**Monday 10th January**  
**with Paul for**  
**Age & Opportunity**  
**Movement Minutes**



#AgeandOpportunity

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

**Local Updates**



**New Cork City Age Friendly Seating**

Members of the Cork Age Friendly City Forum have tested out Cork City's new Age Friendly Public seating - designed and installed to suit the needs of Cork's Older People!

Cork County Council thank all who helped out - occupational therapists, engineers, architects & crews.





## Memories of a Real Cork Christmas

Cork County Age Friendly County Programme released the print edition of the Popular “Memories of a Real Cork Christmas” which shares heart-warming stories from Cork County Older Person’s Council on their traditions and childhood memories.



The Mayor was present with Liz Maddox Chair, Cork County OPC, Liz Maddox Vice Chair, Cork County OPC and Christy Roche, PRO, Cork County OPC.



## JAM at Cork County Library

Cork County Council’s Library and Arts Service is now associated with the JAM Card initiative, a system that allows people with learning difficulties and communication barriers to ask for a minute of patience when they need it. Developed by the NOW Group, it is a discreet way of allowing people with any type of communication difficulty to ask for Just A Minute of patience as they go about their daily lives.



Following staff training, Cork County Council’s Library Service has recently received a Certificate of Accreditation from the NOW Group. The Library

Service takes pride in providing excellent customer care to all patrons and this new initiative will encourage JAM Card users to feel more confident when visiting their local library. Any time a person with a JAM Card needs that little bit of extra assistance or time, they can approach a library staff member, present their JAM Card, and then relate with trained staff who will give those extra few minutes that may be required.

The JAM Card can be used either as a card or an app and is designed to be used by children and adults. It is available free of charge to anyone who needs it by contacting [www.jamcard.org](http://www.jamcard.org).

## 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!

## 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.**

**How to Prevent**

- Wash** your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover** your mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- Avoid** touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean** and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
- Stop** sharing food or drink with others.
- Distance** yourself from others, especially those who appear to 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

**Symptoms**

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

**For daily updates visit** [www.gov.ie/health-covid-19](http://www.gov.ie/health-covid-19)

## Useful Contacts

**Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office** Telephone: 046 9097413  
 Or Email: [rleavy@meathcoco.ie](mailto:rleavy@meathcoco.ie)

Twitter: [@agefriendlyirl](https://twitter.com/agefriendlyirl)  
 Facebook: [Age Friendly Ireland](https://www.facebook.com/Age-Friendly-Ireland)

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