



Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023 - 2027



This Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023 - 2027 aims to build the role of the Health Services in:



Enabling individuals to live longer, healthier lives through all stages of their life by supporting them to adopt healthy behaviours

Supporting people to self-manage and live well with their chronic health condition(s)

Supporting the development of healthy environments that help people and staff to adopt healthy behaviours.



Healthy Ireland Framework

Vision

A Healthy Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility.

Goals

- 1 Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life
- 2 Reduce health inequalities
- 3 Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing
- 4 Create an environment where every individual and sector of society can play their part in achieving a *Healthy Ireland*

The Implementation of Healthy Ireland in the Health Service

The HSE's response to the Government's Healthy Ireland Framework:



- National Implementation Plan 2015 - 2017
- 9 Community Healthcare Organisations Healthy Ireland Plans
- 6 Hospital Group Healthy Ireland Plans



- Progress Report 2015 - 2020
- Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023 - 2027
- HSE Health Regions Healthy Ireland Implementation Plans
Work to commence

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Foreword

CEO Health Service Executive

Being healthy and well is what we cherish most for ourselves, for our family, for our friends and neighbours, and for society more generally. Life expectancy is increasing and mortality rates are declining. Survival rates from conditions such as heart disease, stroke and cancer are improving. Unfortunately enjoyment of good health is not evenly distributed in society. Despite these encouraging trends it is clear that we are facing a significant problem in tackling the increasing rates of chronic disease. Chronic diseases have many personal impacts and puts an unsustainable pressure on the current health services. The challenge is that while these chronic diseases can be prevented they still continue to be our biggest challenge for health. We must make every effort and take every opportunity to prevent these diseases through the promotion of positive health and wellbeing, adopting healthy behaviours with the making of healthy choices in healthy conducive environments. Addressing the prevention and management of these diseases is a pressing priority and is everybody's business.

Since the publication of the *Healthy Ireland Framework*¹ in 2013 significant progress has been made to implement its vision. The Health Service working with our many partners has made a significant contribution to that progress. Hospital Groups and Community Healthcare Organisations embraced the challenge of getting prevention on their agenda, demonstrating a commitment for strong local implementation of actions in their Healthy Ireland plans with national guidance.

I welcome the development of this plan. It represents another important milestone in our effort to remain focused on prevention as well as treatment. It gives direction to promote health and wellbeing and prevent chronic disease in health services and further strengthens partnerships as we work together to improve the health of our growing population. I ask for a united effort from all health service staff to play their part in implementing this plan. I recognise that the objectives and deliverables are challenging but it is a challenge we have to embrace.

I wish to sincerely thank everyone who was involved in the development of this plan, from all across the Health Service and beyond. Those who took part and facilitated stakeholder workshops and those who participated in the online survey, and to everyone who took the time to provide advice and feedback during the development stage. A special thanks to the Oversight Group and our service user representatives and to Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Research for the leadership and guidance they provided.

By implementing this plan we are supporting people and other organisations to create a healthier population and to reduce the burden of chronic disease.

Bernard Gloster
CEO Health Service Executive



Foreword

National Director, Strategy and Research

A combination of the current health status of people living in Ireland, lifestyle trends, and inequalities in health outcomes are leading us towards increasing levels of chronic diseases. The work that is under way through Sláintecare to build a health service that is accessible will only succeed if we build an environment that supports people and their families to live healthier lifestyles.

A focus on prevention and on health and wellbeing are essential in supporting this work. The Sláintecare health reform programme recognises the importance of supporting people to look after and protect their own health and wellbeing.

*Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2025*¹ was a landmark policy published by the Department of Health in 2013 that focused on living healthier lifestyles and preventing chronic disease. This Framework highlighted the need to focus on the improvement of individuals' health and wellbeing by creating healthier environments that promote and support people to adopt healthy behaviours. Promoting health and wellbeing and preventing chronic disease is a critical component of creating a sustainable shift in our national approach to delivering healthcare. Chronic diseases and their complications account for up to 80% of general practitioner (GP) visits, 60% of hospital bed days, and 55% of the acute hospital budget². At least 30% of cancers and 80% of heart disease and diabetes could be prevented by addressing modifiable risk factors such as smoking, alcohol use, poor diet, and physical inactivity². According to McKinsey (2020)³, a 40% reduction in chronic disease could be achieved in the next two decades using interventions that already exist, with 70% of that reduction achievable through prevention by creating healthier environments and healthy behaviour changes.

This *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027* is building on the many achievements to date since the publication of the *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services National Implementation Plan 2015*⁴. It identifies 4 strategic priority areas with 6 key principles and 72 key actions. It recognises that during its life span, the HSE Health Regions will be implemented. In order to maintain and further the advancement of the significant gains made, health and wellbeing need to be integrated and embedded into the operational delivery system of the HSE Health Regions and continue to be appropriately directed and supported by health and wellbeing leads as subject matter experts on both operational delivery and community partnership working.

Creating, improving, and maintaining health and wellbeing is complex. Competing demands between short-term delivery of healthcare solutions and longer-term prevention programmes focused on improving population health remain a challenge. National and local health and wellbeing staff will provide the guidance for the implementation of this plan and be a supportive voice to advocate for population-based interventions and investment in health and wellbeing. However, that alone will not deliver on this plan; delivery calls for a cross-divisional approach across the healthcare system, from Senior Leadership Team to each individual clinician and manager, with everyone playing their part in the delivery of the challenging actions in this plan.

I would like to thank all those who contributed to the development of this plan, including external stakeholders and in particular the Healthy Ireland Oversight Group, which included representatives from all divisions in the HSE, as well as service user representatives.

Dr Philip Crowley,
National Director Strategy and Research

01.

Healthy Ireland in the Health Services: Background and progress

1.1 Introduction and strategic context

There are a number of key policy and reform programmes that set the context and strategic direction for the development and implementation of this *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027*.

Following the launch of the *Government's Healthy Ireland Framework 2013–2025*¹, the Health Service Executive (HSE) developed the *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Implementation Plan 2015*⁴, giving the strategic direction for its role in supporting the achievement of the goals in the Government's Healthy Ireland Framework. This then led to the next level of implementation, with each Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) and Hospital Group (HG) developing their own Healthy Ireland implementation plans. By 2018, the nine CHOs had developed their plans for the period 2018–2022, and five of the HGs had developed their plans for the period 2016–2022. The launch of the Children's Health Ireland plan was delayed until 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2021, the Department of Health launched the national *Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025*⁵. This *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027* sets out the direction for the HSE in delivering on its role for the implementation of that Action Plan. Following the launch of this plan, CHOs and HGs will work together to commence the process for the development of HSE Health Regions Healthy Ireland Implementation Plans. This process will involve a review of their previous plans together with appropriate stakeholder engagement.

Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025⁵

*Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2025*¹ was a landmark policy published by the Department of Health in 2013 that focused on living healthier lifestyles and preventing chronic disease. The Framework promotes a cross-sectoral and cross-Government approach and focuses on four goals:

Increase the proportion of people who are healthy at all stages of life

Reduce health inequalities

Protect the public from threats to health and wellbeing

Create an environment where every individual and sector can play their part in achieving a healthy Ireland.

The Healthy Ireland Framework called out the need to focus on the improvement of individuals' health and wellbeing by creating healthier environments that promote and support people to adopt healthy behaviours. In 2020, the Department of Health reviewed the progress of the implementation of the Healthy Ireland Framework, working with and across 14 Government Departments. That review, which included extensive consultation, informed the development of the *Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025*⁵ policy document, which provides a 5-year road map for implementation of the second phase of the Healthy Ireland Framework.

Reducing health inequalities is highlighted as a priority theme in the updated Healthy Ireland Framework themes, in recognition of a pressing need to address health inequalities and place a greater emphasis on promoting healthy living among communities most in need. The Framework provides the central platform for addressing the social determinants of health that affect how well people can live their lives (Figure 1). It includes a suite of actions to encourage and enable the population to keep well. These include keeping active, staying connected, switching off and being creative, eating well, and minding your body and mood while building healthy homes, communities, cities, and counties; healthy schools and pupils; healthy campuses and students; healthy clubs; and healthy workplaces.

FIGURE 1. SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH^{6,7}

(Adapted from Dalghren and Whitehead, 1991 and Grant and Barton, 2006)



The *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Progress Report 2015-2020*¹¹ provided an update for each of these strategic priorities and the 126 actions.

Health Service Capacity Review 2018⁸

The *Health Service Capacity Review 2018* (HCR)⁸, undertaken by the Department of Health, found that the existing model of healthcare delivery in Ireland was unsustainable. The report set out the capacity requirements for the health service up to 2031, on the assumption three major areas of reform would be delivered, namely:

Healthy living: focused on chronic disease prevention and improvements in health and wellbeing

Enhanced community care: focused on moving from a hospital-centric to a community-based service model.

Hospital productivity: focused on the optimal utilisation of existing and new acute capacity.

The HCR 2018 puts chronic disease prevention at the core of future health service delivery as an essential reform component in order to meet the future service capacity requirements of the population. In response to this, the *Sláintecare Implementation Strategy & Action Plan 2021-2025*⁹ made healthy living a key workstream of one of its reform programmes (Reform Programme 1: Improving Safe, Timely Access to Care, and Promoting Health & Wellbeing). Healthy living and chronic disease prevention should remain a core pillar of future health service capacity reviews.

Focus on prevention and living healthier lifestyles

The Sláintecare health reform programme recognises the importance of supporting people to look after and protect their own health and wellbeing.

The healthcare system will continue to play an important leadership role in driving the whole healthcare system to shift towards a culture that places greater emphasis and value on prevention and keeping people well.

According to McKinsey (2020)³, a 40% reduction in chronic disease could be achieved in the next two decades using interventions that already exist, with 70% of that reduction achievable through prevention by creating healthier environments and making healthy behaviour changes.

Promoting health and wellbeing and preventing chronic disease is a critical component of creating a sustainable shift in our national approach to delivering healthcare. Chronic diseases and their complications account for up to 80% of general practitioner (GP) visits and 60% of hospital bed days². More than half (55%) of the acute hospital budget is spent on the care of patients aged 35 years or older with chronic diseases². At least 30% of cancers and 80% of heart disease and diabetes could be prevented by addressing modifiable risk factors such as smoking, alcohol use, poor diet, physical inactivity, and high body mass index (BMI)².

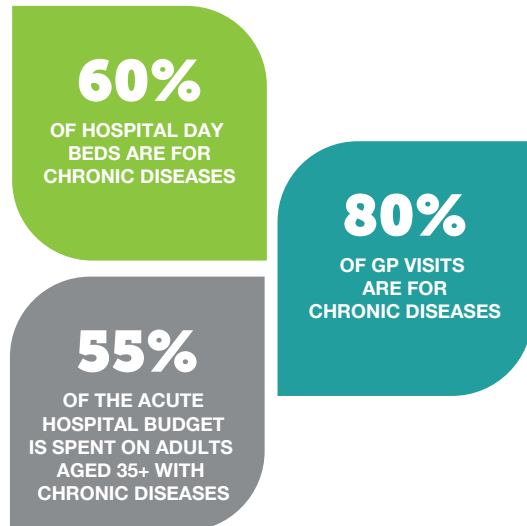
Partnerships

Health and Wellbeing, at local and national level, works with a large number of public sector organisations, community and voluntary partners, philanthropic organisations, businesses, professional and representative bodies, Government Departments, and international partners. These relationships and partnerships present an enormous opportunity to align priorities and resources with the aim of improving health, reducing health inequalities, supporting equal access to quality services, mobilising community involvement, and empowering citizens.



Illustration of partnership working

Creating, improving, and maintaining health and wellbeing is complex. This increases the need for and the importance of having an overall view (i.e. of the population, services, trends, etc.) and understanding of local communities and their specific needs.



Working with statutory, community, and voluntary partners locally allows a ground-up approach to raising awareness, early identification, and delivery of targeted interventions that are relevant and acceptable to local populations. Developing community partnerships and utilising existing community groups are key to promoting health and wellbeing and supporting our population to keep healthy and well.

Current status and context for the *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027*

Lifestyle factors such as smoking, use of alcohol, low levels of physical activity, and obesity continue to be issues which have the potential to jeopardise many of the health gains achieved in recent years. Inequalities in health are closely linked with wider social determinants of health, including living and working conditions, issues of service access, and cultural and physical environments. Taken together with an ageing population, adverse trends will lead to an unhealthy and costly future if they are not addressed now.

The work that is under way through Sláintecare to build a health service that is accessible will only succeed if we build an environment that supports individuals and families to live healthier lifestyles. A focus on prevention and on health and wellbeing is essential in supporting this work.

Evidence and experience from around the world clearly show that creating positive change in health and wellbeing requires the involvement of the whole community, the whole of government, and all of society working in unison. The HSE will continue to maximise the opportunities and to strengthen the evidence base for health and wellbeing through ongoing collaboration with academic partners.

In 2015, the *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services National Implementation Plan*⁴ was published, putting an increased emphasis on prevention, early detection, and self-management. That plan set out 126 actions focused on three strategic priorities:

Health service reform: our greatest opportunity

Reducing the burden of chronic disease: our greatest challenge

Improving staff health and wellbeing: our greatest asset.

The HSE is a major stakeholder in the delivery of the Healthy Ireland agenda and continues to support the implementation of the actions set out in the *Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025*⁵.

HSE Health and Wellbeing National Policy Priority Programmes and associated workstreams provide expertise, strategic advice, and direction on the key known risk factors for chronic disease. They identify evidence-based best practice policies, programmes, and infrastructure to support the translation of national Government policies into implementable actions supporting the health service to keep people healthy and well and to reduce the development of chronic disease.

These National Policy Priority Programmes and other key workstreams will continue to focus on interventions that are based on the best available evidence and are supported by appropriate research and evaluation of each programme.

The *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Progress Report 2015–2020*¹¹ provided an update for each of these strategic priorities and the 126 actions.

1.2 HSE Health Regions

In 2022, the Government announced approval to proceed with the next steps in the implementation of the six HSE Health Regions. The implementation of HSE Health Regions and the introduction of population-based service planning will ensure the alignment of hospital and community healthcare services at a regional level based on defined populations and their local needs, which will in turn deliver on the Sláintecare vision of an integrated health and social care service.

Health and Wellbeing provides strong local leadership for chronic disease prevention and management and is a key player in community partnership working. Integrating and embedding health and wellbeing into the operational delivery system of the HSE Health Regions will build on the significant gains made by Health and Wellbeing, and provides a clear mandate and supporting voice for prevention and early intervention across community and acute settings. Working together in an integrated way to improve population health is an essential requirement of the HSE Health Regions. Collaboration and joint working with Health and Wellbeing and Public Health will ensure that the HSE’s significantly enhanced public health resources and expertise, particularly in the areas of health improvement, health intelligence, and addressing health inequalities, will be leveraged to optimal effect in order to improve the health of the whole population. Key areas of joint working and collaboration between Health and Wellbeing and Public Health will include: supporting integrated population planning, influencing the wider social determinants of health and providing health intelligence in order to inform key priority areas and decision-making within the HSE Health Regions. Health and Wellbeing is already rolling out a population-based resource allocation model through the new Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme, the Weight Management Service for Children and Young People, and the Integrated Alcohol service. Each of the 19 Sláintecare Healthy Communities (SHC) areas were identified by drawing on population health profiling, resource allocation, and input and advice from Local Authorities and CHOs in order to take local operational structures into consideration.

O2.

Development of the Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027

This *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023-2027* aims to build the role of the Health Services in:

Enabling individuals to live longer, healthier lives through all stages of their life by supporting them to adopt healthy behaviours

Supporting people to self-manage and live well with their chronic health condition(s)

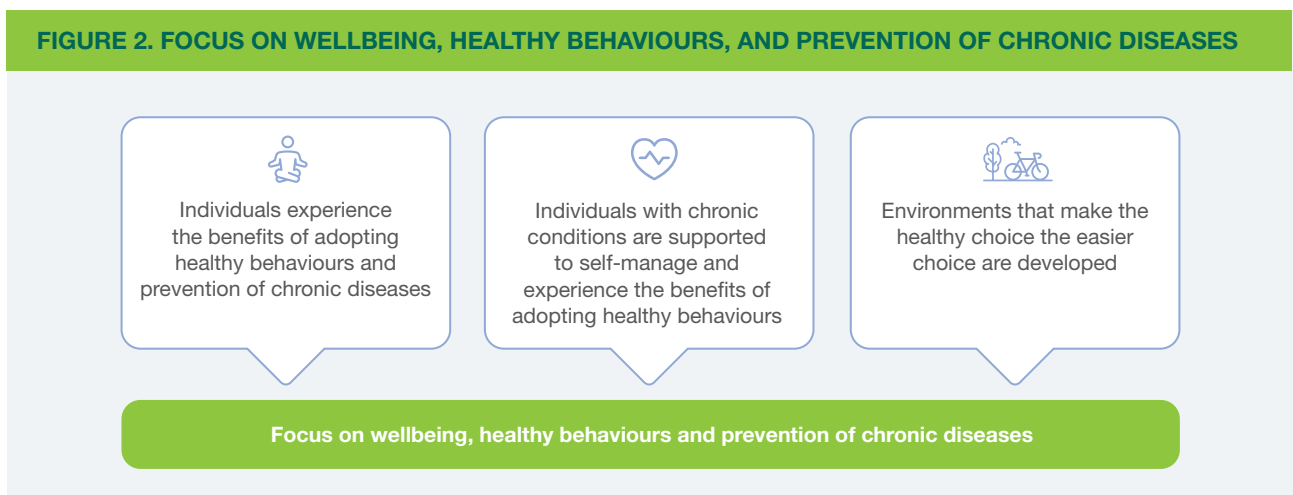
Supporting the development of healthy environments that help people and staff to adopt healthy behaviours.

Since the 2013 publication of *Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2013 – 2025*¹, significant progress has been made towards

implementing the vision of a Healthy Ireland. However, much remains to be done to further promote health and wellbeing in order to support people to live longer and healthier lives while also preventing chronic disease. With approximately 1.3 million people in Ireland living with chronic conditions (e.g. asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), diabetes, and cardiovascular disease), it is critical that we support people to self-manage their chronic conditions in order to improve patient outcomes and reduce pressures on the healthcare system. The largest proportional increases in the population in Ireland will continue to be those aged 85 years and older. The number of people aged 65 years and older will grow from one-fifth to more than one-third of the working population over the next two decades. It is good that people are living longer, but we need to ensure that more of these years, particularly in later life, are spent in good health.

The vision of Healthy Ireland is to ensure that “**everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential**”¹.

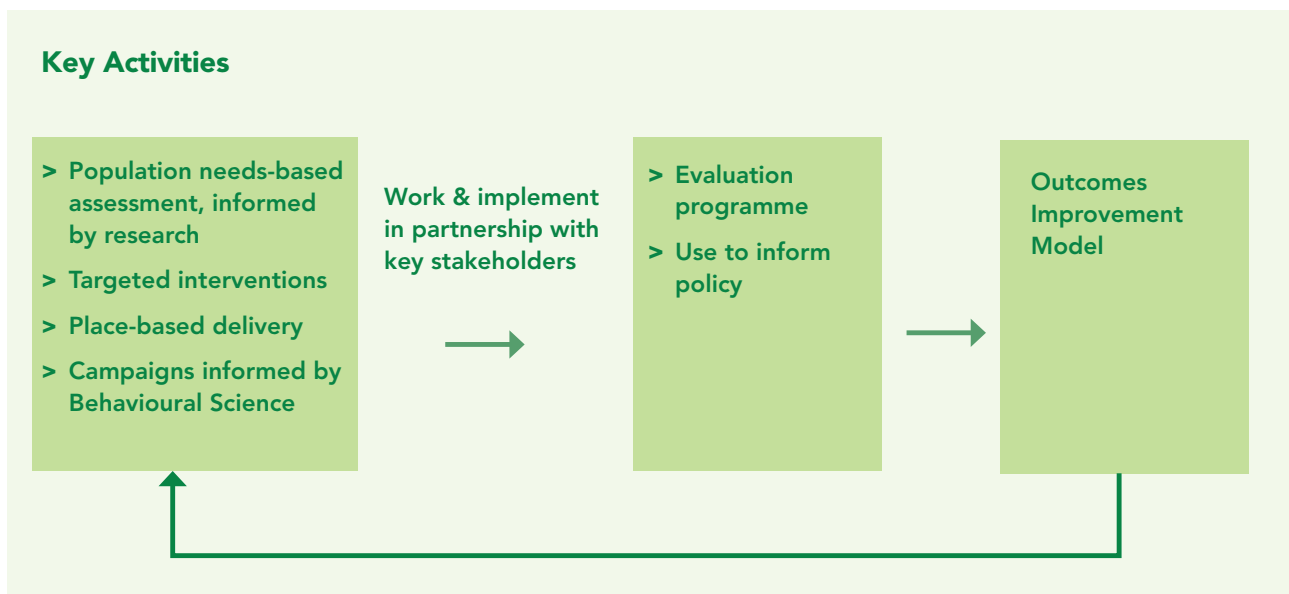
FIGURE 2. FOCUS ON WELLBEING, HEALTHY BEHAVIOURS, AND PREVENTION OF CHRONIC DISEASES



The *Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025*⁵ has emphasised addressing health inequalities and supporting marginalised groups, and ensuring that the hardest-to-reach citizens are empowered and supported to achieve their own health and wellbeing goals. This sets the platform for the Health Service to play its part in delivering the Healthy Ireland agenda.

The development of this *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027* has been informed by the strategic context set out above, and aligns with the implementation of the HSE Health Regions and the focus on the development of fully integrated, clinically informed services. This plan seeks to promote and support the embedding of health and wellbeing as a key operational workstream in each HSE Health Region.

Sláintecare, Healthy Ireland – Addressing Health Inequalities



*Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-25 Infographic, Department of Health, 2021*⁵.

2.1 Stakeholder engagement

An Oversight Group was established to develop this implementation plan with representation from each HSE directorate. Two service user representatives were nominated to the Oversight Group, where they participated in and contributed to discussions during the development of this implementation plan.

A stakeholder consultation was conducted to inform the development of this plan, and this engagement (summarised in Figure 3) included:

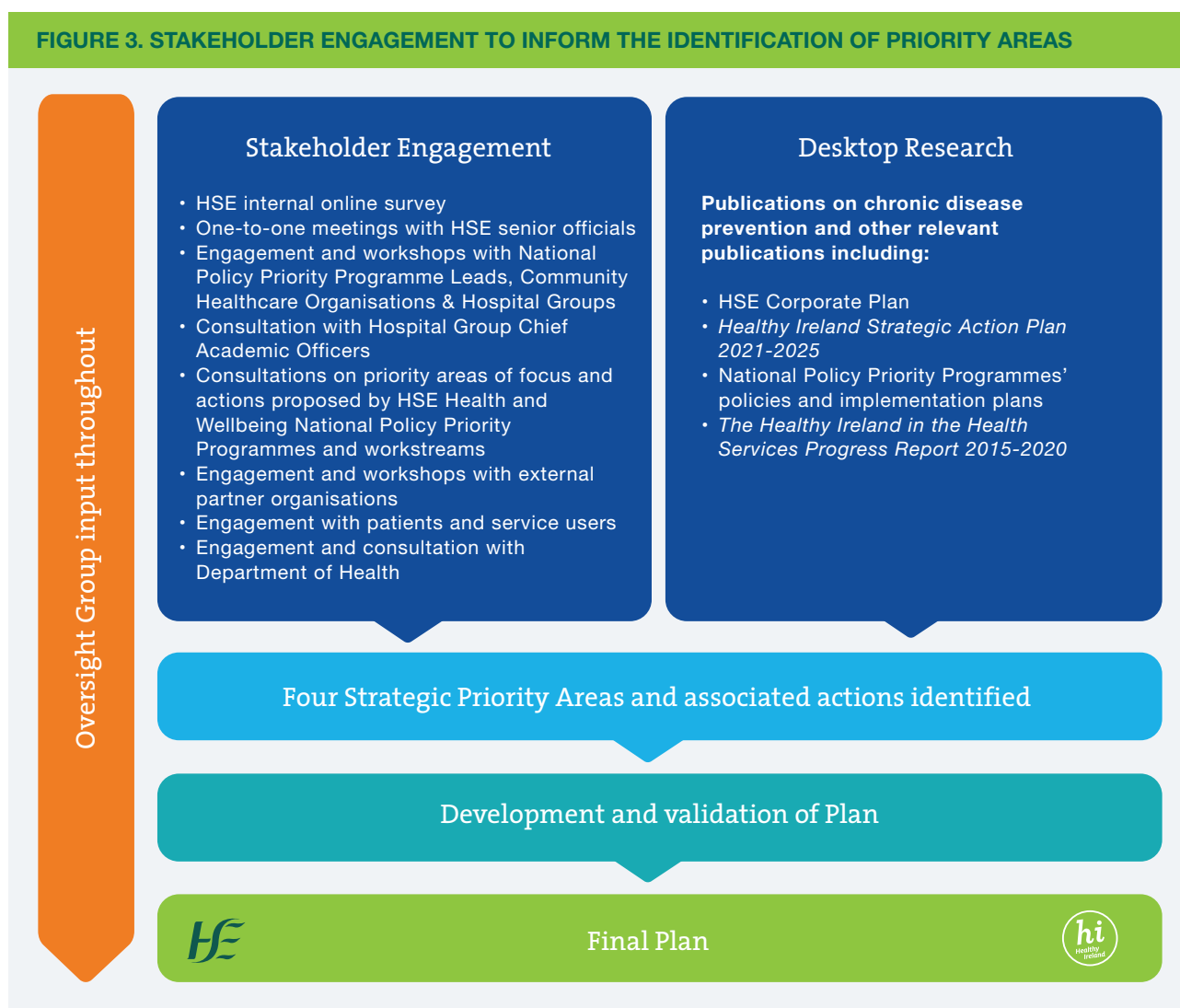
- An internal online survey in the HSE
- One-on-one meetings with senior officials across the HSE
- Engagement and workshops with (a) National Policy Priority Programme Leads, (b) Community Healthcare Organisations through Health of Service for Health and Wellbeing, (c) Health Promotion and Improvement

Managers; and (d) Hospital Groups through the Healthy Ireland Executive Leads and Healthy Ireland Project Managers

- Engagement with the Chief Academic Officers of the Hospital Groups
- Engagement and workshop with external organisations and partners who work with the HSE in the delivery of services for health and wellbeing and chronic disease prevention
- Engagement with patients and service users
- Consultation with the Department of Health.

The workshop for external organisations and partners provided feedback on developing health and wellbeing resources in partnership with service users and external partners. Engagement with the Chief Academic Officers of the Hospital Groups welcomed the strong focus on staff health and wellbeing as well as strengthening our work with partners who can deliver on health and wellbeing initiatives.

FIGURE 3. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT TO INFORM THE IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY AREAS



03.

Strategic priority areas, purpose statement and key principles

Informed by the stakeholder consultation, the *Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025*⁵, the *HSE Corporate Plan 2021-2024*¹⁰, the *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Progress Report 2015-2020*¹¹ and the national policies and associated implementation plans for tobacco, alcohol, healthy eating, physical activity, sexual health, mental health and wellbeing, training and education, and stakeholder engagement and communication, four strategic priority areas were identified for this plan:

3.1 Four strategic priority areas



Embedding health and wellbeing in health service delivery



Strengthening partnership and community working



Supporting healthy behaviours from childhood through to healthy ageing



Supporting staff personal health and wellbeing

The consultation process included the identification of a purpose statement and six key principles guiding the implementation of these four strategic priority areas.

3.2 Purpose statement

“

We will promote and support healthy living and healthy behaviours for all age groups of our population and our staff as part of our core business in the delivery of health and social care services.

3.3 Key principles

Seeking to deliver on the Department of Health's Healthy Ireland Framework vision, "everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential"¹, and using this as our guide, we will:

01.

Leverage our unique opportunity as the organisation in Ireland with the largest public sector workforce and the greatest societal reach **to promote and support healthy behaviours** across all age groups in our population.

02.

Promote the Healthy Ireland vision as we provide and procure services and products and **as part of our partnership work** with voluntary, statutory, and other organisations.

03.

Support people to improve their health and wellbeing, and work with public sector organisations and departments to address the social determinants of health in order to **reduce health inequalities**.

04.

Demonstrate **our commitment to tackling climate change** and promote sustainability by recognising that climate change is having a direct effect on our health and wellbeing, and on the environment.

05.

Aim to maximise the benefits of the implementation and **use of digital technology** to support people's health and wellbeing.

06.

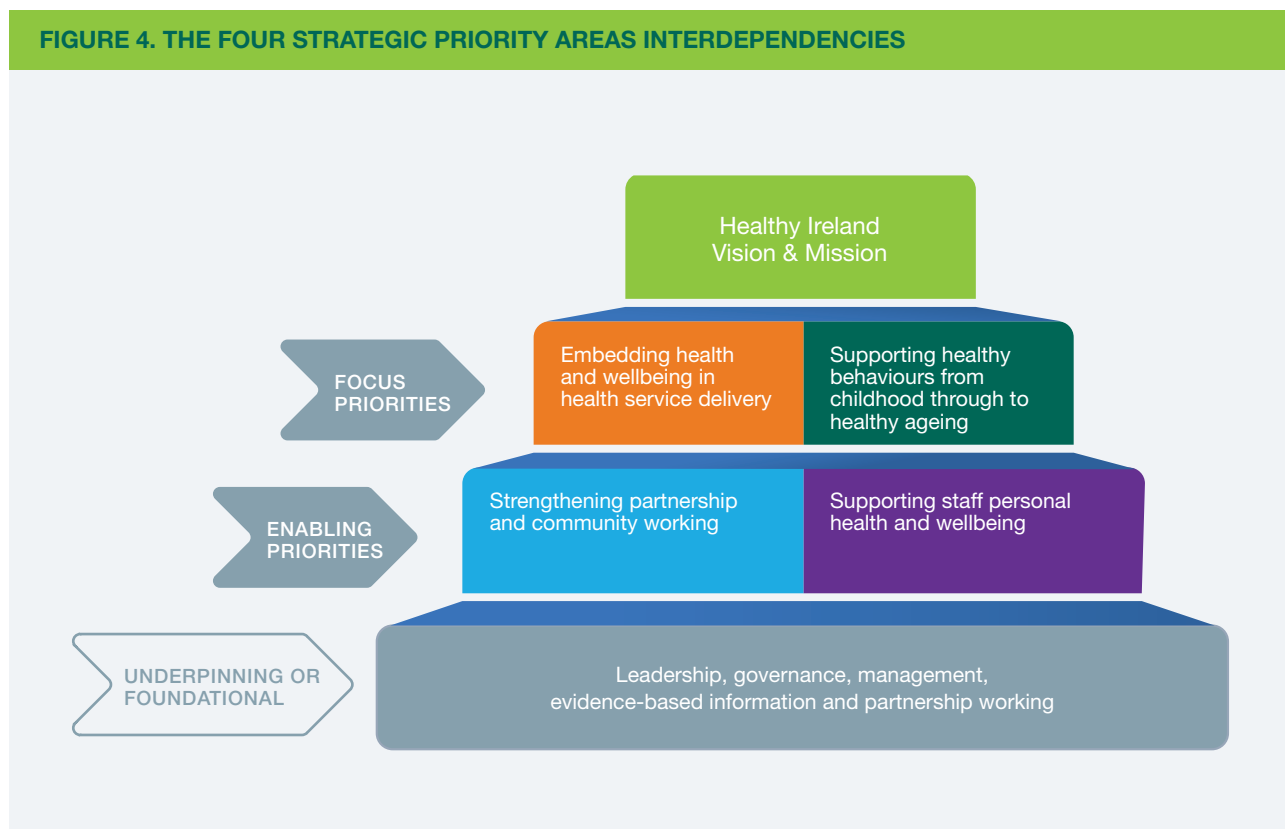
Provide a working environment that supports staff in their own health and wellbeing, demonstrating that we care about them by providing positive working environments where staff feel respected and valued.

Four strategic priority areas



The four strategic priority areas are interdependent, with the achievement of the focus areas of ‘embedding health and wellbeing in health service delivery’ and ‘supporting healthy behaviours from childhood through to healthy ageing’ being highly dependent on the other two strategic priorities, ‘strengthening partnership and community working’ and ‘supporting staff personal health and wellbeing’.

FIGURE 4. THE FOUR STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS INTERDEPENDENCIES



04.

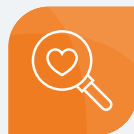
Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027 strategic priorities and actions

A suite of actions is identified for each of the four strategic priority areas in this *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027*. The actions build on the work already under way and highlight a focus on new and emerging themes for the four strategic priority areas.

It is recognised that the roll-out and implementation of this plan will align with the transition to HSE Health Regions. Hospital Groups and Community Healthcare Organisations Healthy Ireland Implementation Plans developed from 2023 onwards and prior to the HSE Health Regions implementation will transition and be developed as appropriate to each HSE Health Region.

For each of the action areas highlighted in this plan additional detailed actions will be identified in the National Policy Priority Programme Implementation Plans and HSE Health Region Healthy Ireland Implementation Plans for the period 2023–2027.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS BY PRIORITY AREA:



Embedding health and wellbeing in health service delivery

8 ACTIONS | 6 MEASURES OF SUCCESS



Strengthening partnership and community working

13 ACTIONS | 7 MEASURES OF SUCCESS



Supporting healthy behaviours from childhood through to healthy ageing

46 ACTIONS | 8 MEASURES OF SUCCESS



Supporting staff personal health and wellbeing

5 ACTIONS | 8 MEASURES OF SUCCESS



4.1 Strategic priority Embedding health and wellbeing in health service delivery

Key actions to embed Health and Wellbeing in health service delivery are set-out below in Table 1.

Within the HSE there is a need for every part of the health service to engage in promoting health and wellbeing and preventing chronic disease. The HSE will seek to embed health and wellbeing across all services and make prevention a core part of performance management and reporting, in addition to exploring options to develop an enhanced set of health and wellbeing metrics for measuring improvements in health outcomes. Recognising the considerable demands on the healthcare system, the HSE will continue to strive for a shift in culture, from an illness orientation to one with an equal focus on prevention, early intervention, self-management, and improvement.

TABLE 1 ACTIONS FOR EMBEDDING HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Establish a broad, high-level HSE Healthy Ireland Oversight Group to provide support and guidance for the implementation of this plan, and for the development of HSE Health Regions Healthy Ireland Implementation Plans.	National Strategy and Research	2023
2	Ensure that health and wellbeing is embedded into the design and implementation of the HSE Health Regions structures .	National Strategy and Research	2023
3	Ensure that Public Health, regionally and nationally, has a central supporting role in the development and implementation of the HSE Health Regions Healthy Ireland Implementation Plans .	Chief Clinical Officer; National Strategy and Research; and HSE Health Regions	2023 - 2024
4	Each CHO/HG is to develop a combined Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan aligned to the HSE Health Regions structures.	CHOs and HGs	2023 - 2024
5	Update all HSE grant service level agreements to include a focus on health and wellbeing, the promotion of healthy behaviours, and the creation of healthier environments as part of all their service delivery.	National Community Operations	2024
6	Increase the focus on research and continue to identify evidence-based health and wellbeing practices in order to inform current and future work.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027
7	Explore the development of an enhanced set of metrics to measure and report on health and wellbeing and health behaviour initiatives.	National Community Operations	2023 - 2024
8	Develop guidance on how the HSE engages with industries whose products and services are harmful to health.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2024

Embedding health and wellbeing in health service delivery

What success will look like:



A population-based approach is used for prioritising areas of focus for health and wellbeing.



Healthy Ireland Implementation Plans are developed and being implemented in each HSE Health Region.



Health and wellbeing criteria and metrics are implemented in all service level agreements and funded partner organisations are reporting against these metrics.



Programmes and new initiatives continue to be identified and implemented using a strategic evidence-based approach, focusing on maximising the use of available resources.



Health and wellbeing and reducing chronic disease are priorities for the HSE Senior Leadership Team, and progress is reported against a **set of health and wellbeing metrics** in regular performance management reviews and at the HSE Senior Leadership Team and HSE Board meetings.



HSE guidance on the management of **engagements with industries** whose products and services are harmful to health is implemented.



4.2 Strategic priority Strengthening partnership and community working

Key actions to strengthen partnership and community working are set-out below in Table 2.

The HSE has made solid progress in developing strong partnerships with national governing organisations, local government, and communities during the implementation of the *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Implementation Plan 2015*⁴. Building on these partnerships and leveraging the resources, knowledge, and local community connections in the promotion of health and wellbeing emerged as a key action during consultation on this implementation plan. The HSE will take a leading role in supporting a coordinated approach to the promotion of health and wellbeing and the prevention of chronic disease in partnership with statutory and voluntary organisations. This will support work under way through the Sláintecare Healthy Communities (SHC) and the Healthy Cities and Counties programmes.

TABLE 2 ACTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY WORKING

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Continue to build on existing relationships and work with local communities and organisations to maximise the use of available resources in order to promote healthy behaviours, chronic disease prevention, and self-management of existing chronic diseases.	National & Local Health and Wellbeing & Community Operations	2023 - 2027
2	Engage with the Department of Education and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on promoting health and wellbeing in education settings.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027
3	Continue to work with the Department of Education and the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on the promotion of health and wellbeing in primary and post-primary schools and third-level institutions through the implementation of the <i>Healthy Campus Charter and Framework</i> ¹² .	National Training and Education Programme	2023 - 2027
4	Build on the relationships developed with GPs through the Chronic Disease Management Programme to expand the implementation of key healthy behaviour interventions and self-management supports.	Integrated Care Programme for the Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease	2023 - 2027
5	Continue to engage and work with GPs on the roll-out and development of the Chronic Disease Management Programme .	National Community Operations	2023 - 2027

TABLE 2 ACTIONS FOR STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY WORKING

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
6	Continue to work with the Department of Health on the Healthy Ireland Survey, which provides key evidence on health behaviours and trends .	National Health Intelligence	2023 - 2027
7	Continue to utilise and explore digital and other innovative technologies in order to support isolated communities to participate in health and wellbeing initiatives.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research & National Community Operations	2023 - 2027
8	Identify and support key opportunities to strengthen arts and health in the HSE with Creative Ireland, the Arts Council, and Healthy Ireland in the Department of Health.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027
9	Maximise the opportunities to strengthen the evidence base for health and wellbeing through collaboration with academic partners .	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027
10	Continue working in partnership with community organisations and Local Authorities to support the roll-out of Sláintecare Healthy Communities in order to address health inequalities.	Local Community Operations	2023 - 2027
11	Continue to support the implementation of the Healthy Cities and Counties programme , working in partnership with the Department of Health, the Department of Rural and Community Development, and Local Authorities.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027
12	Ensure HSE representation on Local Community Development Committees , capitalising on the opportunity to embed and deliver health and wellbeing in the implementation of Local Economic and Community Plans and other strategic plans.	Local Community Operations	2023 - 2027
13	Continue to support Healthy Ireland at Your Library working in partnership with the Department of Health, Local Authorities, and the Local Government Management Agency.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027

Strengthening partnership and community working

What success will look like:



The HSE is recognised across communities, local government, and key national partners as a **leader** in supporting and promoting an integrated approach for the prevention of chronic disease.



Health and wellbeing is **promoted in education** settings through the provision of initiatives that support the development and maintenance of healthy behaviours.



Increased GP participation in the promotion of healthy behaviour interventions and self-management supports, as well as increased evidence of impacts on positive behaviour change.



Digital and innovative technologies are supporting connections in isolated communities with a measurable increase in engagement with health and wellbeing initiatives.



Arts and creative initiatives that enhance health and wellbeing are being implemented.



Continued research and interpretation of the health and wellbeing evidence base is informing practice.



Relationships and collaborative initiatives to embed health and wellbeing with local communities, Local Authorities, and other local organisations continue to be developed and strengthened.



4.3 Strategic priority

Supporting healthy behaviours from childhood through to healthy ageing

Key actions to support healthy behaviours from childhood through to healthy ageing are set-out below in Table 3-12.

This area focuses on promoting and supporting healthy behaviours from early childhood through all stages of life to healthy ageing and on reducing health inequalities. In promoting healthy behaviours and healthy environments through targeted initiatives and interventions, we recognise the important role that people with long-term health conditions can play in managing their own conditions as we support them to live life to their full potential.

TABLE 3 ACTIONS SUPPORTING HEALTHY BEHAVIOURS FROM CHILDHOOD THROUGH TO HEALTHY AGEING

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Ensure that prevention and management of chronic disease is embedded in the new HSE Health Region structures.	National Strategy and Research, and Community Operations	2023 - 2024
2	Ensure specific actions for marginalised and minority groups supporting health and wellbeing and healthy behaviours are included in National Policy Priority Programmes Implementation Plans.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027
3	Scale up the implementation of Making Every Contact Count (MECC) in the health service, including prioritisation in the Sláintecare Healthy Community areas.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027
4	Ensure that behaviour change interventions are fully integrated with the proposed Integrated Community Case Management System (ICCMS) in primary care in order to support the embedding of Making Every Contact Count (MECC) in patient management systems for recording brief interventions, referrals, and patient outcomes.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2024
5	Support and expand the implementation of established models of self-management support, enabling people to live well with their chronic health conditions .	National Community Operations	2023 - 2027
6	Gather the evidence to demonstrate the impacts of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities in reducing health inequalities in order to support the targeted expansion of the programme.	Local and National Community Operations	2023 - 2024
7	Develop a health and wellbeing training and programme design implementation plan .	National Training and Education Programme	2023

TABLE 4 ACTIONS FOR REDUCING THE HARMS OF ALCOHOL USE

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Provide national guidance and leadership for the implementation of the European framework for action on alcohol 2022–2025 ¹³ .	National Alcohol Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
2	Support the evaluation and scaling up of Integrated Alcohol Services across each HSE Health Region.	National Alcohol Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
3	Expand the provision of evidence-based, alcohol-related brief interventions both online and in primary healthcare settings.	National Alcohol Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
4	Work with key stakeholders to progress the implementation of the actions in the HSE Position Paper on Prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) ¹⁴ .	National Alcohol Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
5	Support the implementation of agreed initiatives emerging from the review of the national drug and alcohol strategy, Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery: A health-led response to drug and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025 ¹⁵ , including the prevention and education programme.	National Alcohol Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027

TABLE 5 ACTIONS FOR PROMOTING HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Work with the National Clinical Programme for Obesity to develop and disseminate resources and training to health and social care professionals in order to reduce weight bias and stigma in the health service.	National Healthy Eating and Active Living Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
2	Continue the focus across the health service on implementing the suite of HSE policies that aim to create a healthier food environment for staff and service users.	National Healthy Eating and Active Living Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
3	Support the implementation of the <i>Healthy Weight for Children HSE Action Plan</i> ¹⁶ at HSE Health Region level by embedding it in child health governance and operational health and wellbeing delivery structures.	Local Community Operations	2023 - 2027
4	Develop and implement a communications strategy to strengthen the prevention of childhood obesity by health services, schools, Local Authorities, and community partners such as Children and Young People’s Services Committees (CYPSCs).	National Healthy Childhood Programme	2023 - 2027
5	Lead the design and development of a national standardised model for physical activity pathways in healthcare and provide direction for subsequent implementation across services.	National Healthy Eating and Active Living Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027

TABLE 6 ACTIONS FOR PROMOTING HEALTHY CHILDHOOD

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Continue to embed standardised child health information resources in service settings and support the development of content on the <i>mychild.ie</i> website.	National Community Operations	2023 - 2027
2	Continue to support the Department of Health to address restrictions on advertising of health and behaviour choices that contribute to gambling, addiction, and obesity in Ireland, with a specific focus on the impact on child health and wellbeing.	National Healthy Childhood Programme	2023 - 2027
3	Increase an awareness of cyber safety and the importance of protecting children.	National Healthy Childhood Programme	2023 - 2027
4	Increase rates of breastfeeding through the provision of various infant feeding supports, addressing the marketing of commercial milk formula, and creating awareness of infant feeding in education sectors, communities, and Local Authorities.	National Healthy Childhood Programme	2023 - 2027
5	Increase the awareness and provision of both universal and tiered additional parenting supports and programmes to families and caregivers.	National Healthy Childhood Programme	2023 - 2027
6	Evaluate the effectiveness of current engagement strategies on a range of content promoting child health , including infant mental health, dental health, sleep, language promotion, healthy weight, and other child health topics.	National Healthy Childhood Programme	2023 - 2027
7	Increase the awareness, knowledge, and skills related to infant mental health across all child health services and supports, and progress interagency, community-wide infant mental health networks across the country, involving the HSE, Tusla, and the community voluntary sector.	National Healthy Childhood Programme	2023 - 2027

TABLE 7 ACTIONS FOR PROMOTING HEALTHY AGEING

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Work with Health and Wellbeing, Age Friendly Ireland, and the National Clinical Programme for Older People in HSE Health Regions in the promotion of healthy ageing actions through Local Authorities' Age Friendly structures.	National Community Operations Older Persons	2023 - 2027
2	Work with Health and Wellbeing and the National Clinical Programme for Older People to explore the World Health Organization's (WHO's) Integrated Care for Older People (ICOPE) Tool as a mechanism to enable older people to maintain intrinsic capacity and age well in their own communities .	National Community Operations Older Persons	2023 - 2024
3	Carry out an evaluation of the Community Connectors pilot project , a specialist social prescribing service for older people with complex care needs aligned to the Enhanced Community Care (ECC) Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons in the HSE Health Regions. Subject to a successful evaluation, extend the service within the <i>HSE Social Prescribing Framework</i> ¹⁷ .	National Community Operations Older Persons	2024

TABLE 8 ACTIONS PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Progress the implementation of the actions in Stronger Together: The HSE Mental Health Promotion Plan 2022-2027 ¹⁸ , in collaboration with external partners (e.g. Mental Health Ireland).	National Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
2	Continue to integrate and scale up social prescribing across the health service , working in partnership with the community and voluntary sector, in line with the <i>HSE Social Prescribing Framework</i> ¹⁷ .	National Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
3	Implement and scale up delivery of evidence-based mental health promotion programmes (e.g. HSE Balancing Stress – a practical course on stress management) across school, community, and workplace settings.	National Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
4	Pilot and implement evidence-based, community-wide mental health promotion programmes (e.g. Act-Belong-Commit) that are designed to support active engagement in activities that promote positive mental health and wellbeing.	National Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027

TABLE 9 ACTIONS PROMOTING SEXUAL HEALTH

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Inform the development and implementation of the forthcoming National Sexual Health Strategy within the HSE.	National Sexual Health Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
2	Develop and implement a model of care for the delivery of sexually transmitted infection services and sexual health services in Ireland.	National Sexual Health Policy Priority Programme	2023 – 2025
3	Develop and implement a model of care for unplanned pregnancy counselling .	National Sexual Health Policy Priority Programme	2023 – 2025
4	Develop, promote, and disseminate sexual health education and information resources to key target audiences.	National Sexual Health Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
5	Generate high-quality research and data on sexual health and crisis pregnancy to inform practice and policy.	National Sexual Health Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027

TABLE 10 ACTIONS PROMOTING TOBACCO FREE IRELAND

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Develop an online stop smoking medication training module for healthcare professionals.	National Tobacco Free Ireland Policy Priority Programme	2023
2	Work with the National Women and Infants Health Programme (NWIHP) to develop agreed evidence-based tobacco control actions , which include establishing dedicated on-site services across our maternity services.	National Tobacco Free Ireland Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2025
3	Work with Mental Health Services to advocate for and support the development of on-site stop smoking services within acute and community mental health services .	National Tobacco Free Ireland Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
4	Implement the We Can Quit programme under the auspices of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Initiative.	National Tobacco Free Ireland Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
5	Promote Tobacco Free Campuses for all healthcare facilities and support the development of tobacco-free environments across external organisations, such as sporting and recreational facilities.	National Tobacco Free Ireland Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027
6	Develop and produce Quit TV and radio campaigns and evaluate their effectiveness.	National Tobacco Free Ireland Policy Priority Programme	2023 - 2027

TABLE 11 ACTION PROMOTING MEN'S HEALTH

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Finalise and implement the second HSE Healthy Ireland Men's Health Action Plan for 2023–2027 .	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027

TABLE 12 ACTIONS PROMOTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMUNICATIONS

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	Develop specific campaigns promoting wellbeing and healthy behaviours with a focus on increasing awareness in hard-to-reach communities .	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research and Communication and Stakeholder Engagement	2023 - 2027
2	Implement the actions outlined in the HSE Health and Wellbeing Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan, with a focus on prevention and on the adoption of healthy behaviours.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research and Communication and Stakeholder Engagement	2023 - 2027
3	Identify opportunities and resources to integrate technology in order to support improving the health and wellbeing of individuals.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 - 2027

Supporting healthy behaviours from childhood through to healthy ageing

What success will look like:



Health and wellbeing and the promotion of healthy behaviours are a **central part of the HSE Health Regions management and reporting structures.**



Marginalised groups and groups with specific needs are supported through **targeted campaigns** and actions.



National Policy Priority Programmes meet new and emerging needs for **chronic disease prevention.**



Increased rates of implementation of established models of self-management support for chronic health conditions.



In collaboration with delivery partners, the **Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme has been successfully rolled out** and expanded in line with Government commitments, and there has been measurable progress in reducing health inequalities.



Increased awareness of wellbeing and healthy behaviours in the population, particularly in hard-to-reach communities.



Making Every Contact Count MECC is part of engagement with all service users.



Healthy Ireland Survey data showing **improved rates of healthy behaviours** in the population at all stages of life.



4.4 Strategic priority Supporting staff personal health and wellbeing

Key actions to support staff personal health and wellbeing are set-out below in Table 13.

The Department of Health's *Healthy Ireland at Work: A National Framework for Healthy Workplaces in Ireland 2021–2025*¹⁹ is the Government strategy to enhance the health and wellbeing of Ireland's workers and is part of the *Healthy Ireland Framework 2013–2025*¹. It sets the strategic direction for workplace policies and programmes to enhance the health of workers, and integrates existing laws and Government policies. It aligns with other Government strategies on issues such as reducing injuries and ill health, as well as promoting active travel and positive mental health. Taking part in good-quality health and wellbeing initiatives in the workplace has multiple benefits for both workers and businesses. In order to be effective, organisations need to embed wellbeing into their culture, as well as creating a safe environment and offer workplace wellbeing programmes.

In the HSE, staff supports and services are provided by a number of service areas and units working collaboratively, which include National Human Resources (HR), the National Quality and Patient Safety Directorate, and National Health and Wellbeing.

The forthcoming HSE Healthy Workplace Framework (2023) builds on the *World Health Organization Avenues of influence for a Healthy Workplace*²⁰. The World Health Organization avenues of influence identifies four areas of influence, (physical work environment, psychosocial work environment, personal health resources, and involvement) which are not separate entities, but rather each overlap with one another.

The national HSE HR Workplace Health and Wellbeing Unit (WHWU) is leading the implementation of the forthcoming HSE Healthy Workplace Framework (HWF). This HWF includes a suite of actions for initial implementation to build capacity in support of a healthy workplace; establish "healthy workplace teams"; and engage with staff and key stakeholders to inform and implement a healthy workplace programme at local level.

This *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027* complements the implementation of the HSE HWF. In keeping with the Healthy Ireland focus on the prevention of chronic disease, the focus in this plan is on enhancing the healthy behaviours of HSE staff and on the creation of a workplace that supports these behaviours.

FIGURE 5. WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION AVENUES OF INFLUENCE FOR A HEALTHY WORKPLACE 2010²⁰

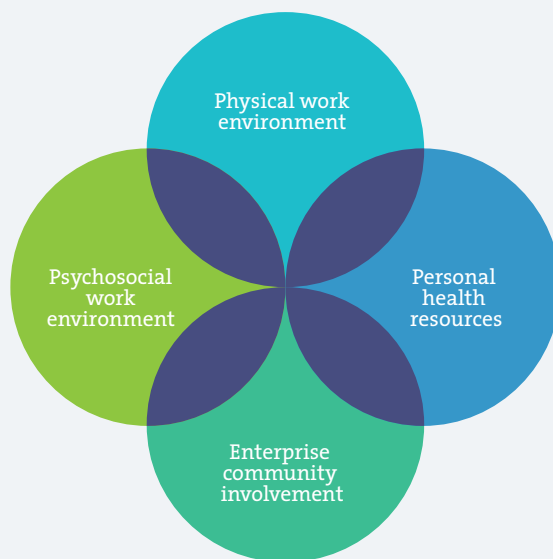


TABLE 13 ACTIONS SUPPORTING STAFF PERSONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

No.	Action	Lead	Timeframe
1	National and Local Health and Wellbeing to support the implementation of the HSE Healthy Workplace Framework led by National HR, Workplace Health & Wellbeing Unit.	National HR	2023 – 2027
2	Continue the implementation of HSE policies and guidelines that promote healthy staff behaviours , championing and promoting the participation of staff in initiatives that increase healthy behaviours at every level.	National HR	2023 – 2027
3	Develop toolkits, evidence-based guidance, and training courses to enhance staff and managers' knowledge of personal healthy behaviours.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research	2023 – 2027
4	Explore options to identify how data can be captured to provide information on staff levels of health.	National Health and Wellbeing, Strategy and Research and National HR	2023 - 2024
5	Raise staff awareness about climate action , building commitment for the implementation of the HSE Climate Action Strategy.	National and Local HR	2023 – 2027

Supporting staff personal health and wellbeing

What success will look like:



The HSE Healthy Workplace **Framework is implemented.**



Increased levels of participation by staff in national and local health and wellbeing staff initiatives.



Increased awareness among staff of the benefits of and opportunities for physical and mental health.



Your Opinion Counts²¹ staff survey shows that **staff feel their wellbeing is valued** by their employer.



HSE policies and guidelines that promote healthy staff behaviours are **implemented.**



A suite of resources is available online to support staff health and wellbeing.



There is a **data capture system in place** giving visibility of staff health and wellbeing, and enabling the management of risk factors.



Staff are engaged in the implementation of the **HSE Climate Action Strategy.**

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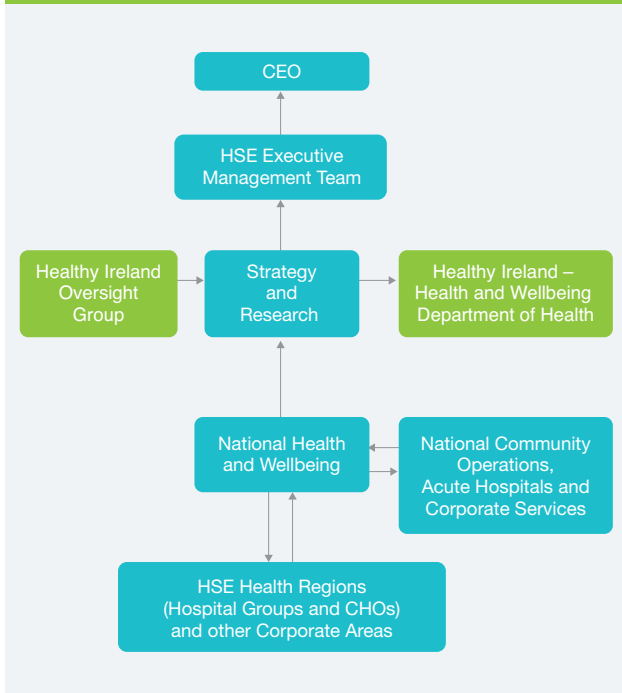
Healthy Ireland governance and leadership

Establishing clear governance with senior leadership support and responsibility was a hallmark for the successful implementation of the *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Implementation Plan 2015*⁴. The governance structure to oversee the implementation of this new plan will build on these learnings and includes clear leadership from the HSE Board, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Senior Leadership Team, and across the organisation, as well as from intersectoral and partner organisations.

5.1 Oversight of the *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027*

The leadership and governance structure for the implementation of this *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027* is shown in Figure 6.

FIGURE 6. GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE FOR THE HEALTH SERVICES HEALTHY IRELAND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2023–2027



A National HSE Healthy Ireland Implementation Oversight Group will be established whose primary responsibilities will be to:

- Provide oversight and support the monitoring of the implementation of this *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027*
- Ensure that all initiatives and programmes are aligned and integrated across the health service
- Ensure that programmes are adequately resourced and funded in line with agreed annual National Service Plan provisions
- Oversee the engagement with partner organisations so that the HSE builds on effective collaboration.

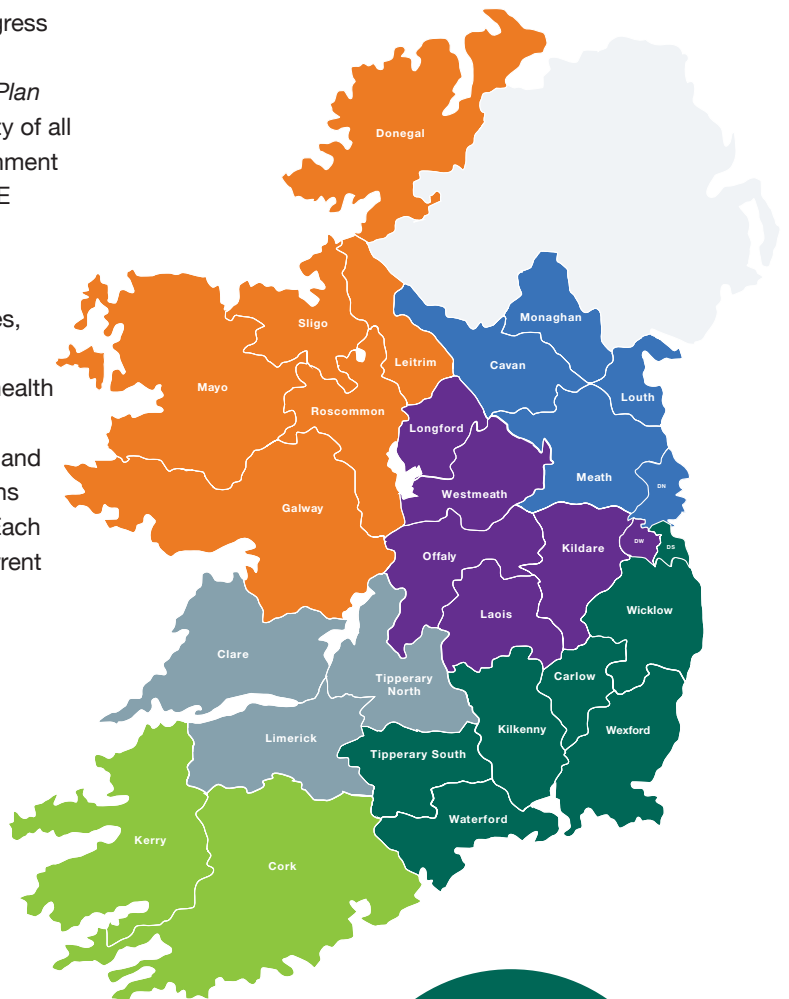
The HSE's CEO and Senior Leadership Team will provide leadership and direction for the implementation of this plan. They will also support the development of key performance metrics and incorporate them into management performance reviews. Progress on this implementation will be included in Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Research progress updates to the HSE Board and the Department of Health.

06.

Transition to HSE Health Regions

The transition to the six HSE Health Regions will progress during 2023, with a full roll-out taking place in 2024. This *Health Services Healthy Ireland Implementation Plan 2023–2027* is cross-divisional, and is the responsibility of all areas across the HSE. It is to be implemented in alignment with the transitioning arrangements and plans for HSE Health Regions.

The Health and Wellbeing teams in the HSE Health Regions will build on existing structures and resources, and, in collaboration with national and local Senior Management Teams, will ensure the prioritisation of health and wellbeing at local level. An initial objective of this plan will be for Community Healthcare Organisations and Hospital Groups to develop local implementation plans that align with the goals and objectives of this plan. Each local implementation plan will need to include the current transitioning arrangements and move to HSE Health Regions in 2024.



SIX HSE HEALTH REGIONS

FSS an Iarthair agus an Iarthuaiscirt
HSE West and North West

FSS Bhaile Átha Cliath agus an Oirthuaiscirt
HSE Dublin and North East

FSS Bhaile Átha Cliath agus Lár na Tíre
HSE Dublin and Midlands

FSS an Iarthar Láir
HSE Midwest

FSS Bhaile Átha Cliath agus an Oirdheiscirt
HSE Dublin and South East

FSS an Iardheiscirt
HSE South West

The HSE
is Ireland's public
health and social
care service.



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Appendix 1 Further background informing this plan and progress to date

Healthy Ireland in the Health Services

The most valuable resource for individuals is their health and wellbeing. Good health and wellbeing greatly enhance a person's life so that they can enjoy life to their full potential. However, modern lifestyle (which is primarily sedentary and has high levels of stress, an unhealthy diet, the use of alcohol and smoking, and a lack of quality sleep) is resulting in the development of chronic diseases causing premature deaths and the need for people to live their lives managing these conditions.

Chronic disease is largely preventable through the avoidance and/or management of the evidence-based known modifiable risk factors relating to:

- Tobacco use
- Physical inactivity
- Use of alcohol
- Unhealthy diet
- Mental health and wellbeing

While most risk factors are modifiable, tackling them continues to be one of the major challenges both now and into the future.

Healthy Ireland Framework 2013–2025¹

The Healthy Ireland Framework set out an all-of-Government, long-term (2013–2025) policy approach to supporting our own health and wellbeing. In 2020, the Department of Health reviewed the progress on the implementation of the Healthy Ireland Framework working with and across 14 Government Departments.

As part of this process, the Department of Health undertook a wide-ranging stakeholder engagement

exercise in order to shape the implementation of Healthy Ireland for the remaining years of the existing Framework. This cross-sectoral and cross-departmental stakeholder engagement informed the development of the *Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025*⁵.

Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025⁵

The *Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025*⁵ provided a 5-year road map for the implementation of the second stage of the *Healthy Ireland Framework 2013–2025*¹. The Action Plan recognises a pressing need to improve health inequalities and place a greater emphasis on promoting Healthy Ireland among disadvantaged and hard-to-reach communities. Reducing health inequalities is highlighted in the Action Plan as a priority area for further work. The Action Plan includes a suite of actions from both a personal and a settings approach to encourage and enable the population to improve their health and wellbeing. These include Keeping Active, Staying Connected, Eating Well, Minding Your Body and Mood, while building Healthy Homes, Cities and Counties, Schools, Workplaces, Campuses and Communities. Each of these action areas are led by a Government Department. The Health Service Executive (HSE) continues to support the implementation of these policy actions.

Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Implementation Plan 2015–2017⁴

In 2015, *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services National Implementation Plan*⁴ was published, putting an increased emphasis on prevention, early detection, and self-management support. It included 126 large-scale actions underpinning the delivery of three strategic priorities, of which 66 referred to Community Healthcare Organisations and Hospital Groups. The development and ongoing implementation of local Healthy Ireland implementation plans in each of the nine Community Healthcare Organisations and six Hospital Groups was a key achievement, creating a shift in mindsets to reorient our health service from an illness focus to focusing on

keeping people well, prevention, early intervention, and health promotion.

Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Progress Report¹¹

The HSE conducted a review of progress and published the *Healthy Ireland in the Health Services Progress Report 2015 – 2020*¹¹. This Progress Report includes details of the frameworks, policies, plans, activities, resources, and campaigns delivered over the 2015–2020 period.

Health and Wellbeing National Policy Priority Programmes

The current suite of National Policy Priority Programmes focus on tobacco use; the use of alcohol; physical inactivity; healthy eating; mental health and wellbeing; and sexual health. Health and Wellbeing continues to invest in the growth of these programmes. Exploration of these programmes should continue for future development in support of an enhanced, integrated approach for the prevention of chronic disease.

The impact of COVID-19 on the health services

The impact of COVID-19 resulted in unprecedented interruptions to health service delivery, with existing prevention and treatment services being significantly affected, the rapid development of new services, and the redeployment of staff to support those services.

Many hospitals and health service providers pivoted to a purely telemedicine model during the most restrictive periods of the pandemic, and this model has prevailed in many areas of service provision. The COVID-19 pandemic created new momentum for eHealth and forced the implementation of eHealth technologies, such as ePrescribing and telehealth²², revealing the critical role of eHealth applications in enabling the delivery of vital remote healthcare and the importance of being able to obtain timely access to accurate data. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, telemedicine has increased fivefold in Ireland²³.

One encouraging result of the COVID-19 pandemic is that it has elevated public awareness of the crisis of chronic disease. Research has established a relationship between lifestyle-related health conditions and severe illness from COVID-19. Studies are showing that combinations of lifestyle risk factors such as smoking, physical inactivity, and obesity accounted for up to 51% of severe COVID-19 cases.

The national *Healthy Ireland Survey 2022*²⁴ looked at the impact of COVID-19 on health behaviours during 2021 and 2022. Thirty-four percent of respondents reported that they were either drinking more, smoking more, or had gained weight.

Healthy Ireland Surveys 2015–2022

The findings from the annual Healthy Ireland Survey are a key measurement tool for Healthy Ireland. The survey gives the most up-to-date picture of the health of the nation, including lifestyle factors on smoking, alcohol consumption, physical activity, diet, and mental wellbeing. In the *Healthy Ireland Survey 2022*²⁴, some indicators were showing people making positive healthy behaviour changes:

The smoking rate dropped from 23% in 2015 to 18% in 2022.

Fifty-six percent of respondents were overweight or obese in 2022, compared with 62% in 2017.

Thirty-four percent of those with overweight or obesity in 2022 were trying to lose weight, compared with 49% in 2015.

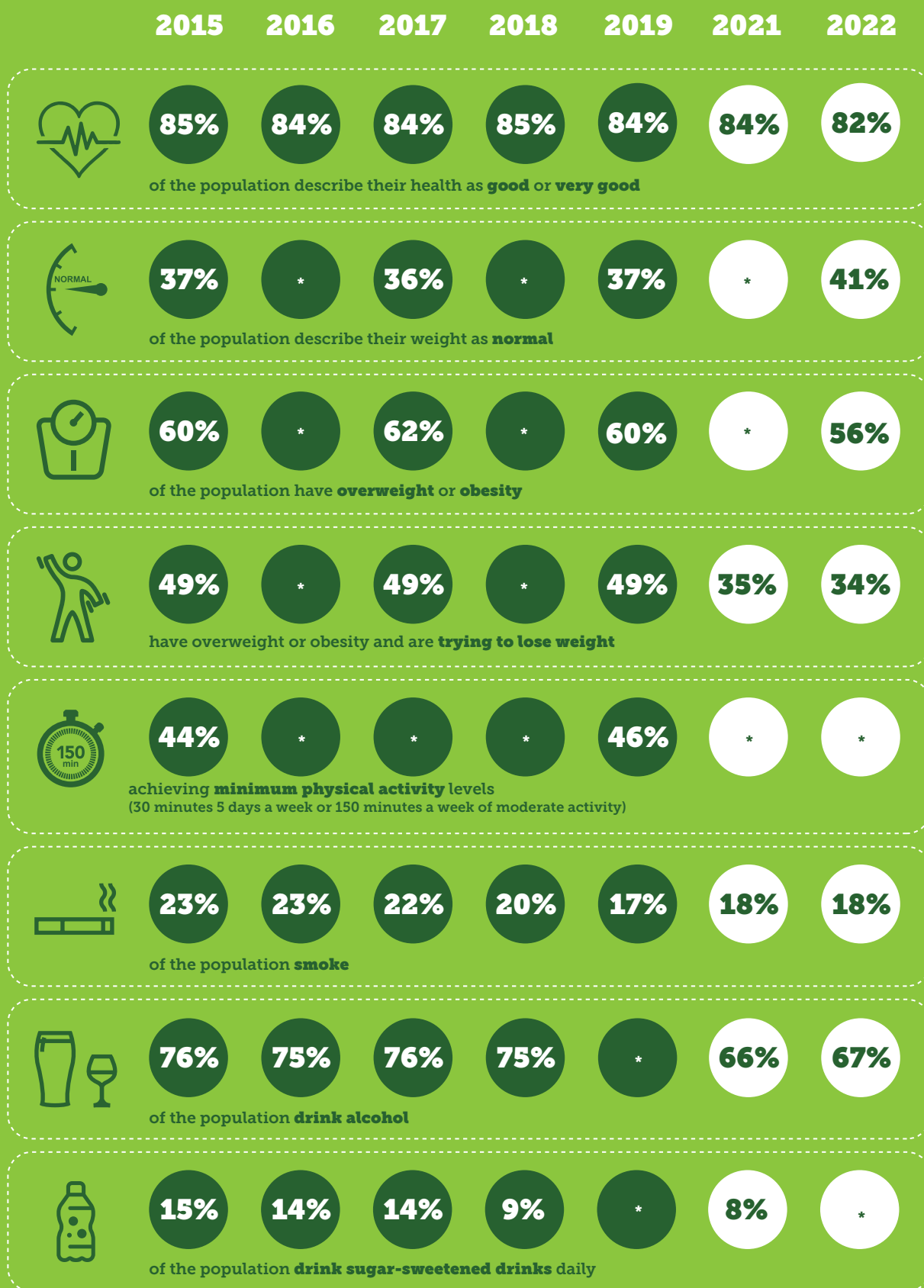
It is worth noting that caution is needed when comparing 2022 results with those from survey waves prior to 2021 due to the change in survey methodology from face-to-face to telephone interviews.

FIGURE 7. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE HEALTHY IRELAND SURVEY 2022²⁴



A summary of the trends in lifestyle behaviour risk factors as measured by the Healthy Ireland Survey is shown in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8. BEHAVIOUR CHANGE IN THE HEALTHY IRELAND SURVEYS, 2015–2022



* These statistics are reported in Healthy Ireland Surveys. Not all lifestyle behaviours can be included in the HI survey each year as it is not feasible to focus on all areas due to the breadth of the programme. This approach gives the opportunity for the survey to focus in-depth on some specific areas of interest each year.

** Note the Survey could not be carried out in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

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Appendix 2 List of abbreviations

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CHO	Community Healthcare Organisation
DOH	Department of Health
FSS	Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
GP	General Practitioner
HG	Hospital Group
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Service Executive
HWF	Healthy Workplace Framework
MECC	Making Every Contact Count
SHC	Sláintecare Healthy Communities

03.

Appendix 3 Oversight Group for plan development

NAME	REPRESENTING:
Dr Philip Crowley (Chair)	National Strategy and Research
Sarah McCormack (Project Manager)	Healthy Ireland Health and Wellbeing
Aghna Harte	National Communications
Angela Alder	National Community Operations
Anne Pardy	National Healthy Childhood
Brian Donovan	National Finance
Damien Nee	Service User Representative
Diane Lynch/Una Twomey	National HR
Dr Orlaith O'Reilly	Public Health
Dr Paul Kavanagh	Health Intelligence
Fiona Donovan	Healthy Ireland Health and Wellbeing
Gabrielle O'Keefe	Heads of Service Health and Wellbeing
Helen Deely	Health and Wellbeing and National Policy Priority Programmes
Jack Nagle (External Project Lead)	ALPHA Healthcare Ltd
John Smith	National Hospital Office
Julie Ryan	National Procurement
Kevin Sheridan	Climate Action and Sustainability
Maria Bridgeman	Community Healthcare Organisations Chief Officers
Marie Killeen	Operations Planning
Mark Kane	Capital & Estates
Martin Curley	Digital Transformation and Open Innovation
Shelia McConnell	Service User Representative
Siobhan Lines	Hospital Groups Healthy Ireland Project Managers
Suzanne Dunne	Hospital Groups Healthy Ireland Executive Leads
Yvonne Gilsenan	Healthy Ireland Health and Wellbeing

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By 2024 Healthy Ireland will have supported:

19



Sláintecare Healthy Communities established in disadvantaged communities

Initiatives developed to address health inequalities implemented in 19 areas by 2022 and roll-out to more groups progressed.

4,500



People benefitting from the Sláintecare Age-Friendly Healthy Homes Scheme

The new scheme will help older people to live in their own home with dignity and independence for as long as possible.

14



Government Departments with enhanced involvement on the determinants of health

Government Departments will have ownership of actions across Government on the determinants of health.

5+



New policies developed to promote and improve public health and wellbeing

The evidence-led policies and action plans will address sexual health, physical activity, nutrition, obesity, alcohol and mental health promotion.

500



More GAA clubs providing the holistic Healthy Clubs model to members and communities

An action plan to drive participation among other sporting organisations will be developed and implementation evaluated.

30



Third-level institutions implementing the Healthy Campus programme

Toolkits and evaluation guidelines to support local programmes will be produced and models of best practice will be identified.

Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-25 Infographic, Department of Health, 2021⁵.



HSE Health and Wellbeing

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HSE Health and Wellbeing website: www.hse.ie/healthandwellbeing/

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