

Irish Cancer Prevention Network



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scaghástála
National Screening Service

Newsletter April 2023

Welcome to the Irish Cancer Prevention Network (ICPN) newsletter. This quarterly newsletter shares with you cancer prevention facts and initiatives.

You can contact the ICPN at prevention@cancercontrol.ie to share your cancer prevention initiatives.

ICPN Steps to Reduce your Cancer Risk: Facts

Each individual person's risk of getting cancer is influenced by a wide range of factors. Things that we can't change (like our age and genetics) and things that we can change (like what we eat, whether we drink alcohol, exercise, and protect our skin from the sun).

However, **we can all take steps to reduce our risk of cancer.**

The ICPN Steps to reduce your cancer risk poster can be downloaded [here](#).

Launch of new National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2023-2026

The new National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2023-2026 was launched in the Department of Health in March 2023. Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Ireland, with almost 13,000 new cases every year. This number is projected to double by 2045. However, the majority of cases can be prevented by following skin protection behaviours.

Developed by the National Cancer Control Programme in partnership with Healthy Ireland, the new National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2023-2026 was completed in consultation with cancer charities, healthcare professionals and national organisations representing priority groups.

It builds on the foundations of public awareness created via the original plan which ran from 2019 to 2022.

It includes a number of actions designed to target specific groups which have been identified as being particularly vulnerable to UV damage. These include children and young people, outdoor workers and those who participate in outdoor leisure activities as well as sunbed users.

The core messages will be amplified through the annual SunSmart communications campaign which uses a range of platforms to provide targeted key messages about skin protective behaviours.

The new National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2023-2026 can be viewed and downloaded [here](#).



Watch back the World Cancer Day ‘Steps to reduce our cancer risk’ 2023 webinar

ICPN aims to reduce cancer risk by raising awareness of steps we can all take to reduce our risk of cancer and ensure that people are provided with the information and support they need to adopt healthy lifestyles. World Cancer Day (WCD) is an international awareness day held each year on the 4th of February. WCD seeks to raise public awareness of cancer and empower individuals, populations and governments to take action to prevent and tackle cancer.

If you missed the live webinar on February 2nd and wish to watch it back or share it, the links are available below:

- [Smoking Tobacco/Passive Smoking: Steps to Reduce your cancer risk: Dr. Paul Kavanagh, Specialist in Public Health Medicine from the HSE](#)
- [Vaccinations: Steps to reduce your cancer risk: Dr Treasa Kelleher, Specialist in Public Health Medicine, National Immunisation Office, HSE](#)
- [HRT: Prof Martin O’Sullivan, Consultant Surgeon, Cork University Hospital](#)
- [Screening to reduce your cancer risk: Dr Alan Smith, National Screening Service](#)
- [Update on Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2023-26, Maria McEnery, Cancer Prevention Officer, NCCP](#)

Cancer Prevention Initiatives

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

This Bowel Cancer Awareness Month, the Marie Keating Foundation has partnered with patient ambassadors and medical professionals to share an important message. Colorectal (bowel) cancer is the second most common cancer in men and third most common cancer in women in Ireland. It is the third leading cause of cancer death. The campaign is encouraging the public to get to know bowel cancer's signs and symptoms, speak to their GP if they notice a change in their bathroom habits and avail of their free bowel cancer screening (FIT) test from Bowel Screen if aged over sixty. This campaign is also urging the public not to wait until screening age to become aware of bowel health – if you have any concerns about changes in your body, have #NoRegrets and immediately talk to your GP. More information at <https://mariekeating.ie/noregrets/>

Men's Health Week – The Picture of Health

It is common to hear people in Ireland saying: *'ah, sure, your man's the picture of health'*. However, this is not always the case - indeed, research clearly shows that men in Ireland experience a disproportionate burden of ill-health and die too young. To see some of the evidence, have a look at the 'Men's Health in Numbers' publications at: <https://www.mhfi.org/news/1096-men-s-health-in-numbers.html>

However, this is not a lost cause. Ireland continues to be a global leader in men's health. Indeed, it even had the first National Men's Health Policy in the world. But, there is always more work that can be done.

Men's Health Week (MHW) offers a unique opportunity to make positive changes by: heightening awareness of preventable health problems; supporting men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices / activities; and encouraging the early detection / treatment of health problems. This year, MHW will run from Monday 12th - Sunday 18th June.

The theme for Ireland in 2023 is **'The Picture of Health'**. During the week, everyone is asked to reflect upon what 'a picture of health' looks like, and to set realistic and practical targets to improve men's health.

Find out more about MHW at: <https://www.mhfi.org/mhw/about-mhw.html>



SunSmart campaign (April – September 2023)

The annual SunSmart campaign is run by the HSE's National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP), in collaboration with Healthy Ireland and cross-sectoral partners. We are working together to support people to reduce their risk of skin cancer by protecting their skin from the sun. This is the fourth year of the campaign and each year it continues to grow.

Partner packs for the campaign contain information, video links and image links for your use and to share with your own networks to support the SunSmart campaign 2023. We welcome you being part of the campaign by posting SunSmart content to your social media channels using #SunSmart in newsletters or publications. Partner packs are available to download at www.hse.ie/sunsmart

Get SunSmart! Children's Art Competition

The HSE's NCCP in collaboration with Healthy Ireland have launched the Get SunSmart! Children's Art Competition. The competition is open to all primary school children and depending on their age category, are invited to complete the SunSmart colouring sheets or draw their own picture showing how to be SunSmart. There are three age categories with a prize for the winner in each category. The three age categories are junior infants to 1st class; 2nd to 4th class, and 5th and 6th class. The competition is designed to help educate young people about the importance of protecting your skin while enjoying time outdoors. Children and young people are particularly vulnerable to the damaging effects of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. The competition runs until 17.00 on 31 May, 2023. For details of the competition rules as well as instructions on how to enter, see the competition webpage at www.gov.ie/getsunsmart



HSE **nccp** National Cancer Control Programme

hi Healthy Ireland **SunSmart**

Get SunSmart! Children's art competition

Prizes: An OPW Family Heritage Card, a Family Day Pass for Dublin Zoo and a National Book Token

Runner up prizes also up for grabs!

**Closing date
31st May 2023**

#SunSmart

Catching Cancer Early – Marie Keating Foundation at Bloom

During this June Bank Holiday, the Marie Keating Foundation will be hosting another show garden at Bloom in the Phoenix Park with the theme of ‘Catching Cancer Early’. The garden will be a great platform to engage the thousands of visitors to Bloom about reducing their risk of cancer, learn about the signs and symptoms of common cancers and also how to spot cancer early.

Irish Melanoma Forum

The Irish Melanoma Forum Scientific Committee 2023 Scientific meeting will take place in person on Friday 26th May in UCD O’Reilly Hall. A call for abstracts and posters is open with submission deadline Monday 25th April at 5pm. Submit abstracts for review to abstracts@ccis.ie. Registration is now open. Please register using meeting code: IMF23 via www.conferencediary.ie

Cancer Prevention Research

As part of their new Research Strategy 2022-2027 “Making More Survivors”, Breakthrough Cancer Research have developed an All-Ireland Cancer Networks (AllCaN) Programme targeting research investment into prevention, detection and treatment of the seven cancers in Ireland (and worldwide) with the lowest survival rates. The first of these networks launched on World Cancer Day 2023 with grant funding support of one million euros and is focused on oesophageal cancer.

The UK and Ireland have one of the highest incidences of oesophageal adenocarcinoma worldwide. The new AllCaN Oesophageal cancer programme team will increase our understanding of the factors influencing the progression of Barrett’s Oesophagus, a precancerous condition, into oesophageal cancer through investigation of an All-Ireland Barrett’s Oesophagus Registry, one of the largest worldwide. The team will also develop lifestyle interventions to improve the quality of life and reduce the risk of those with Barrett’s oesophagus and oesophageal cancer and to develop biomarkers to identify early those who are at higher risk of developing oesophageal cancer.

To read more about the research and exceptional team go to:

<https://breakthroughcancerresearch.ie/news/allcan/>

Perceptions of the European Code Against Cancer Research

Researchers from Dublin City University (DCU) are working in collaboration with the International Agency for Cancer Research to explore understanding and use of the recommendations of European Code Against Cancer among people living in Ireland.

This research aims to understand individuals' motivation to adopt the recommendations to reduce their risk of cancer described in the [European Code Against Cancer](#). In addition, this study aims to explore their previous experiences of engaging with cancer prevention behaviours, and the issues which help and/or hinder actions to reduce their risk of cancer. This research will help experts to understand what factors influence individuals' willingness to change their behaviours and inform future cancer prevention interventions.

Researchers at DCU are inviting members of the public aged 18 to 65 with no previous diagnoses of cancer living in Ireland to take part in a short interview. More information: <https://survey.zohopublic.eu/zs/BHDH7g>

Publications

The National Cancer Registry of Ireland published the Cancer inequalities in Ireland by deprivation, 2004-2018 report, available by clicking [here](#). This report measures differences in cancer incidence, five-year survival and stage at presentation between populations living in the most and least deprived areas in Ireland for the diagnosis period 2014-2018.

Cancer Risk Reduction Awareness Dates for your Diary

- Bowel Cancer Awareness Month April
- SunSmart Campaign April - September
- World Ovarian Day 8th May
- European Week Against Cancer 25th May
- World No Tobacco Day 31st May
- International Men's Health Week 12th June

A continued focus on cancer prevention is essential to reduce the serious impact of cancer on the lives of thousands of people in Ireland.

The ICPN provides an avenue to collaborate and identify opportunities to work together to prevent cancer for current and future generations. We aim to support implementation of the National Cancer Strategy's cancer prevention recommendations.

Visit www.hse.ie/cancerprevention for more information and resources.

Please contact the ICPN for support with your cancer prevention ideas, initiatives or research at prevention@cancercontrol.ie