



National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2019-2022

Implementation Review 2021

Background

This first [National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2019-2022](#) was a landmark commitment arising from our [National Cancer Strategy 2017-2026](#).

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in Ireland. With over 13,000 cases diagnosed each year it accounts for over one-third of all cancers diagnosed annually¹.

The number of people being diagnosed with skin cancer in Ireland is rising rapidly. It is generally classified into two groups: melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC). Between 2020 and 2045, it is predicted that the number of cases of melanoma per year among males and females will increase by 67% and NMSC to increase by 110%².

Yet, skin cancer is largely preventable by protecting skin from ultraviolet (UV) radiation. UV is emitted naturally from the sun and also comes from artificial sources such as sunbeds. Following the Healthy Ireland SunSmart code can protect against skin cancer (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Healthy Ireland SunSmart Code (5 S's)

¹ National Cancer Registry Ireland (2020) Cancer in Ireland 1994-2018 with estimates for 2018-2020: Annual report of the National Cancer Registry. NCRI, Cork, Ireland.

² National Cancer Registry (2019) Cancer incidence projections for Ireland 2020-2045. National Cancer Registry, Cork

National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan Implementation

The aim of the National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan 2019-2022 is to develop and implement evidence-based strategies, which will increase awareness and adoption of skin cancer prevention behaviours through cross-sectoral collaboration.

An overarching cross-sectoral advisory group guides and implements the plan. The plan sets out areas that are distinct yet complementary building blocks to reverse the rising incidence of skin cancer in Ireland. Seven thematic areas are outlined in the plan with specific actions. By employing a combination of targeted strategies including education, media campaigns, environmental measures and policy changes across multiple settings, the plan aims to:

- Increase awareness of skin cancer prevention
- Improve adoption of skin cancer preventative behaviours
- Monitor change and evaluate plan effectiveness

This document provides a review on implementation of each of the thematic areas for 2021. Of note, during this year the Covid-19 pandemic impacted upon implementation, as did the HSE cyber-attack. Despite this, implementation progressed while adapting to this new environment.

National Skin Cancer Prevention Plan Implementation Review 2021

Status	Ref.	Action	Lead	Summary Update
Thematic Area 1: Establish oversight for implementation of skin cancer prevention plan				
Complete	1.1	Establish governance and reporting structure aligned with the National Cancer Strategy	DoH, NCCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-sectoral advisory group established, governance and terms of reference agreed. • Sub-groups for target areas Children & Young People, Outdoor Workers, Outdoor Leisure, Sunbed Users and Awareness Raising established. • Building relationships with stakeholders is ongoing. • Cancer Prevention Co-ordinator commenced role in Dec 2020. • Annual review 2021 complete.
Complete	1.2	Assign skin cancer prevention plan coordinator	NCCP	
Complete	1.3	Establish a cross-sectoral advisory group to guide and implement plan	DoH, NCCP	
Started	1.4	Identify and build relationships with stakeholders to implement plan	DoH, NCCP	
Started	1.5	Undertake annual review of implementation of plan	NCCP	
Thematic Area 2: Increase national awareness of skin cancer prevention and improve adoption of skin cancer preventative behaviours				
Complete	2.1	Agree evidence based key messages for skin cancer prevention in Ireland	DoH, NCCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence based key messages agreed and published. • Vitamin D evidence review completed. • SunSmart branding agreed and published. • Pathway for organisations to apply to use SunSmart branding agreed and publicised. • Social media assets developed for target populations incorporating SunSmart branding. • Patient story videos developed. • Partner packs including resources for general population and target populations shared nationally and with target population stakeholders. • Communications plan 2021 delivered including radio campaign, social media as well as media coverage both in press and TV.
Started	2.2	Develop skin cancer prevention resources to increase awareness and support behavioural interventions for use by all stakeholders	DoH, NCCP/HSE	
Complete	2.3	Develop an annual communications plan	DoH, NCCP/HSE	
Started	2.4	Integrate skin cancer prevention education into existing educational and training avenues	Implementation group	
Started	2.5	Provide access to support for organisations and communities to implement skin cancer prevention interventions	Implementation group	
Started	2.6	Explore feasibility of evidence-based fiscal measures in support of skin cancer prevention behaviours	DoH	

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of 2021 SunSmart campaign completed through pre and post campaign survey. • Translation of kids resources to Irish and shared with Tuismitheoirí na Gaeltachta. • Lesson plans for primary schools in CHO2 piloted, consultation with teachers completed to inform update of lesson plans for future roll out. • FAQ document developed for PHN's on sun protection for babies and children. • UV information included on Met Eiréann website and social media. • 5 animation videos developed with Irish Skin Foundation and UHLG, trialled on UHLG hospital screens. • SPHE lesson plans for 2nd year students developed. • Cancer prevention e-learning modules currently being developed, to include a module on UV exposure. • SunSmart webpage developed and published.
Status	Ref.	Action	Lead	Summary Update
Thematic Area 3: Children and Young People				
Complete	3.1	Develop a comprehensive profile of school-children's risk and protective behaviours relating to UV exposure to inform the implementation of the plan	IPH, NUIG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education material for early childcare organisations included in Healthy Ireland Smart Start programme, National Childhood Network and available on SunSmart hub on HSE website. • SunSmart messaging included on mychild website, Early Childhood Ireland, Parents Centre and Nutrition Reference Pack for infants 0-12 months 7th edition. • Provision of shade included in the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings.
Started	3.2	Develop skin protection resources for use by schools, Early Learning and Care (ELC) and School Aged Children (SAC) settings	NCCP, Implementation Group	
Complete	3.3	Include children and young people in the development of resources and implementation of programmes in which they are key stakeholders	DoH	
Started	3.4	In line with the updating of the Quality and Regulatory Framework/s for ELC settings, include current messages and advice about skin cancer prevention for young children	Tusla/DCYA	

Started	3.5	Communicate up to date messages and advice about skin cancer prevention for young children in Tusla communications with Early Learning and Care Services including periodic newsletters, with a particular focus on how ELC and SAC can incorporate this into their work	Tusla/DCYA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linked with DCEDIY re Quality and Regulatory Framework/s for ELC settings, to discuss SunSmart inclusion when updating. • SunSmart text submitted for Public Health Nurses Manual developed by mychild. • SunSmart partner packs disseminated to key children and young people stakeholders. • FAQ document developed for PHN's on sun protection for babies and children. • Provision of UV protective long sleeve shirts and SunSmart games pack to kids summer camps piloted. • Piloted SunSmart education programme in Primary Schools in CHO2 followed by evaluation and consultation with teachers to future inform the lesson plans update and roll out. • SPHE lesson plans for 2nd year students developed. • Linked with AgriKids as part of Irish Farmers Association on SunSmart messaging. • Baby box evidence review completed and submission for inclusion of SunSmart item sent to DCEDIY. • Consultation with kids aged 12-18 and children from travelling community completed with report. • Sun protection resources and information disseminated on Scoilnet portal.
Started	3.6	Identify opportunities to include messages about skin cancer prevention for babies, children and young people in communications with parents, including through initiatives identified in First5	DCYA, DoH, HSE	
Started	3.7	Develop resources to increase awareness of UV risk and protection among young children attending ELC settings, in line with the roll-out of Aistear, the National Curriculum for Early Childhood	DES, DCYA	
Complete	3.8	Ensure the provision of shade is included in the Universal Design Guidelines for Early Learning and Care Settings	DCYA, DoH, HSE	
Started	3.9	Disseminate and promote resources to support the curriculum in relation to skin protection for use in primary and post primary schools, including through the official Scoilnet portal	DES, DCYA	
Status	Ref.	Action	Lead	Summary Update
Thematic Area 4: Outdoor Workers				
Started	4.1	Identify and pursue opportunities to raise awareness of UV risk and protection among outdoor workers through employer bodies and employee groups and fora	Implementation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed online repository of resources: Outdoor Workers SunSmart Framework, Audit and Monitoring tool, Evaluation Survey, Terms of Reference for outdoor worker employers
Started	4.2	Develop resources to support employers to adopt policies for UV protection for outdoor workers	Implementation group	

Started	4.3	Incorporate skin cancer prevention messaging and behaviours into healthy workplaces initiatives	DoH	<p>SunSmart Implementation groups and examples of international tools and resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot conducted with Cork City Council. • Webinar event held with Teagasc for Farm Advisers and families of farmers. • Webinar held with key outdoor worker stakeholders from 30+ organisations on skin cancer prevention. • Podcast with Farming community recorded. • Outdoor Worker animation video developed with Met Eireann and other key stakeholders to highlight UV risk among those who work outdoors. • SunSmart partner packs disseminated to key outdoor worker stakeholders. • Comms activity in collaboration with Health & Safety Authority and Irish Farmers Association. • Ongoing work with outdoor worker stakeholders on developing initiatives and resources on UV risk among outdoor workers including ongoing meetings, sharing of resources and showcasing best practice • Proposal prepared for research on risk profiling outdoor workers in Ireland. • Solar UV Exposure Risk Assessment for Outdoor Workers resource developed and piloted. • In process of developing sample UV protection policy for outdoor workers. • Wide brimmed hats pilot for outdoor workers underway.
Thematic Area 5: Outdoor Leisure				
Started	5.1	Promote evidence informed messages for those who participate in, or spectate at, outdoor sport, physical activity or leisure activities through the governing bodies, local sports partnerships and relevant sports	Implementation group, Sport Ireland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key message resources developed for various outdoor leisure settings.

Started	5.2	Develop resources for use by organisations responsible for outdoor leisure to support a doption of policies for UV protection	Implementation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework & sample UV protection policy for outdoor leisure developed and shared with Sport Ireland. • SunSmart partner packs disseminated to outdoor leisure stakeholders. • Provided children's national summer camps (Let's Go Summer Camps) with SunSmart games pack and long sleeve t-shirts for pilot locations. • Survey conducted with Tennis Ireland on awareness, knowledge and attitudes on sun protection and education piece delivered for coaches.
Started	5.3	Work with groups responsible for management of outdoor recreation areas to identify means of maximising UV protection	Implementation group	
Status	Ref.	Action	Lead	Summary Update
Thematic Area 6: Sunbeds and other artificial UV sources				
Started	6.1	Increase awareness of risk of sunbed use delivering consistent messages in line with Schedule 1 of the Public Health (Sunbeds) (Health Information) Regulations 2015	Implementation Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing linkage with Environmental Health Officers at HSE Sunbed Office on numbers of registered sunbed providers and regulations. • Leaflet & educational event held with Pavee Point to highlight sunbed risk with the Travelling community. • Development of baseline survey underway and will be rolled out in Tallaght Hospital, Dublin on sunbed use among patients attending dermatology clinic. • Developing case for feasibility of eliminating sunbed use in Ireland. Identifying other emerging artificial sources of UV.
Started	6.2	Monitor and review implementation and enforcement by the HSE Environmental Health Service of the Public Health Sunbeds Legislation.	DoH	
Started	6.3	Examine the feasibility of eliminating sunbed use	Implementation Group	
Started	6.4	Identify other emerging artificial sources of UV	Implementation Group	
Thematic Area 7: Monitoring, research and evaluation				
Complete	7.1	Agree outcome measures and develop a monitoring framework	NCCP, DoH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome measures and monitoring framework developed.

Started	7.2	Collate and conduct research to monitor changes in skin cancer prevention knowledge, attitudes and behaviours	NCCP, DoH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Ireland survey 2022 to include skin protection questions, providing behaviour and awareness data to compare with 2019 data. • Research on economic cost of skin cancer in progress. • Annual update 2021 complete and to be used by advisory group to inform 2022 direction. • Evaluation of SunSmart 2021 campaign completed.
Started	7.3	Identify and pursue research needs to support and monitor implementation of plan	NCCP, DoH	
Started	7.4	Produce an annual update on progress	NCCP, DoH	
Started	7.5	Review plan implementation to inform future direction	NCCP, DoH	

Implementation Group Members

Department of Health (Health and Wellbeing Unit)

Breakthrough Cancer Research

HSE Dermatology Clinical Programme

HSE Communications

HSE Health & Wellbeing

Irish Cancer Society

Irish Dermatology Nurses Association

Irish Skin Foundation

Marie Keating Foundation

National Cancer Control Programme

NCCP Skin Cancer Leads group

National Screening Service

Patient Public Representative (Melanoma Trust)