

Notes from 13th Meeting of National Executive 2014-15

21st February 2015

Attendees at this meeting: 18 out of 33 attended

John Sutton, Carlow; **Conor McCabe**, Cavan; **Shauna Williams**, Cork City; **Jane Hayes-Nally**, Cork Co; **Maria Ferry**, Donegal; **Dylan Kennedy**, South Dublin; **Garreth O'Connor**, Fingal; **Max Lavelle**, Kilkenny; **Ella Mulkerrins**, Leitrim; **Emma Moloney**, Limerick; **Andrew Duffy**, Louth; **Sofia Vajenina**, Mayo; **Cillian Byrne**, Meath; **Lily Cheung**, Monaghan; **Cárthach O'Faoláin**, Waterford County; **Becky O'Connell**, Waterford City; **Niamh Tubridy**, Westmeath; **Murray Kennedy**, Wicklow

Focus of the twelfth meeting:

- Feedback and update from National Executive sub-group
- Finalising the Five-a-Day national template—coming up with a broad menu of ideas under each one
- Discussion on plans for National launch
- Showing of Showcase DVD II
- Update on Your Comhairle Needs You 2015
- Formation of two sub-groups:
 - Group 1: Working on the communication from National Executive to Comhairle coordinators
 - Group 2: Working on communication around Your Comhairle Needs You



Morning Session

Feedback and update on Sub-group meeting on 18th February 2015

Attendees: Murray Kennedy, Garreth O'Connor, Ella Mulkerrins, Max Lavelle and Megan Ní Mhathúna

Update on two items:

- Facebook status re: Let's Go Mental 2015
- Letter written to Minister James Reilly re: funding for Let's Go Mental 2015

Facebook status:

The sub-group were tasked with coming up with a Facebook status which would clearly and simply explain what the regional Let's Go Mental 2015 events are about to their peers in two sentences. It needed to be short and written in youth-friendly language. It will be used when the Let's Go Mental 2015 Facebook page is set up and will be used as an explanatory paragraph in the About section of the page. This is what they came up with.

'A teenage mental health and music event. Listen to local music acts, have fun with friends and try new things. Coming to a town near you!'



This was broadly agreed on by the majority at the meeting.

Morning Session

Letter to Minister James Reilly

The sub-group were also tasked with coming up with a letter to Minister for Children and Youth Affairs Dr James Reilly requesting additional funding for Let's Go Mental 2015.

This letter was agreed upon by all in attendance at the meeting and will be sent to him on behalf of the Comhairle na nÓg National Executive in the commencing **23rd Feb 2015**—please find attached.

Update by Participation Officers on feedback they have received from Comhairle coordinators in relation to Let's Go Mental 2015

Some key points:

- Not every Comhairle is working on mental health as a topic and the event may not fit with their work plan for the year, hence we may have to settle for less than the planned 31 events.
- Suggestion by Garreth, one of the National Executive members, that a number of Comhairlí in the same region could join forces and host a joint event. Would have to be in the same geographical region for logistical purposes.
- Original timing of regional events for week commencing 22nd June was problematic for a number of Comhairle, particularly around the staffing and supervision of such an event at a time when staff are either involved in summer projects or on annual leave
- Suggestion re: incorporating the regional event into the Comhairle AGM—this received a positive response from some coordinators, but would not suit others as they already have a plan in place for their 2015 AGM and have a venue booked.
- Issue around the feasibility of having 31 regional events on the same day: some coordinators already have a plan to host a mental health event during the summer months and would like this to incorporate the Let's Go Mental event. Incorporating Let's Go Mental into the AGM was a better option for other Comhairlí which would mean their events taking place in September or October.
- As it may not be feasible to have all events on the same day, it is likely we will be looking at a series of events happening over a five month period—June to October 2015

Action points:

- Anne O'Donnell to send out an email communication from DCYA about Let's Go Mental 2015 to all coordinators in the week commencing **23rd Feb**.
- ⇒ The aim of this communication is to open up a dialogue with coordinators in relation to this event and to get a better sense of what the situation is across the country in relation to capacity to manage this in the different regions.
- ⇒ Included will be a letter from National Executive members, put together by a sub-group at the end of this meeting, asking coordinators to facilitate in making these events a reality.
- ⇒ Also included will be an information pack with some clearer information around the expectations of the events, a national template containing a menu of options to fulfil the 'Five-a-Day for your mental health' concept.

Morning session:

Finalising the Five-a-Day national template

Coming up with final menu for each of the Five-a-Day concepts

- Working in five small groups, each one was given a worksheet with one of the Five-a-Day concepts: **CONNECT**, **BE AWARE**, **GET MOVING**, **GET INVOLVED** and **GIVE**. Below each heading was a list of all the fantastic suggestions as to how to fulfil this concept from the previous meeting. Each group was tasked with grouping the existing suggestions into general menu headings with sub-headings below. They were then given the opportunity to add in any new ideas.
- These will form a National Template for Let's Go Mental 2015 and will be rolled out to all coordinators as part of the DCYA mailing—please find attached.

It is important to note that this is a **menu of ideas**—Comhairles do not have to implement all of these menu items at the regional events—they have the freedom to choose just one per concept, or incorporate a combination of them all. This will of course depend on the venue available locally.

Final menu of options on the following pages:



Morning Session

CONNECT: Final menu of options

1. Connectivity games

- ⇒ Human Bingo / Giant Jenga / Shark Attack / Giant Connect 4
- ⇒ Ice-breakers—2 truths, 1 lie; find someone in the room who likes...
- ⇒ 'Speed-Friending'—take on speed-dating—1 minute conversations—different topic at each one

2. Connect using social media

- ⇒ Connect with the other regional Let's Go Mental events
- ⇒ Events on the same day—use Skype to connect with them—show communication on a big screen
- ⇒ Create connections through shared hashtag —create an online campaign on Twitter and Facebook—sharing photos from regional events using the hashtag. Also sharing photos of 'the thing I did today for my mental health' or photos of something that made you happy that day
- ⇒ Twitter feed of #LetsGoMental2015 shown at each event
- ⇒ Using projector and screen—share photomontage and videos from previous events—running on a loop in background.

3. Photo Booth

- ⇒ Take pics with your friends or with new people you've connected with that day—links in with speed-friending idea

4. Dream Sharing

- ⇒ Write an aspirational dream on a piece of paper at the start of the day. Put it in a box. At end of day, you take a dream—connect with someone else's dream



Morning Session

BE AWARE: Final menu of options

1. Promote Self-Awareness

- ⇒ Taster Meditation / Mindfulness / Yoga session
- ⇒ Chill-out area: bean bags, relaxing music, headphones...

2. Promote awareness of the world around you

- ⇒ Through medium of photography: Take photos of:
 - *Something that made you happy that day
 - *Something that makes you happy every day
 - *Something beautiful from the natural world
- ⇒ Post photos online using the hashtag.
- ⇒ Have those images running on a loop in the Be Aware area

3. Provision of information on mental health services

- ⇒ Information stands on the available local & national services—allows young people attending to 'be aware' of the services accessible to young people.
- ⇒ Ties in with 'being aware of how you're feeling' - knowing when to ask for help and where to go to access information.

4. Thoughts Wall

- ⇒ Space to write how you're feeling today
- ⇒ Space to share the things that make you happy
- ⇒ Space to share 'what you did today for your mental health'

Morning Session

GET MOVING: Final menu of options

1. Stands advertising local sports clubs & other physical activities in the area

- ⇒ To include all different types of activities available in the area including walking / hiking, cycling, martial arts/ yoga & Pilates, dance classes etc...
- ⇒ Information about the local gym: some free passes given out to attendees

2. Taster sessions: experience a new physical activity on the day

- ⇒ Dance class / Zumba / Céilí / Silent Disco
- ⇒ Yoga / Pilates / Tai Chi / Martial Arts
- ⇒ Personal trainer: offer sample class from local gym

3. Group Activities & Competitions

- ⇒ Have fun with old-school games such as Egg & Spoon/ Sack/Three-Legged/Wheelbarrow race
- ⇒ Bouncy castles / Zorbing/ Pogo-sticks/ wall climbing/Obstacle courses / Archery / Dodgeball
- ⇒ Challenges: Keepie-Uppie challenge / basketball shooting competitions
- ⇒ Prizes given out at end, e.g. gym gear / membership

4. Show off what you've learned during the day

- ⇒ End the day on a Flash Mob—for example, Zumba flash-mob—based on a dance learned at taster class
- ⇒ Learn a short dance at taster dance classes: at the end of the event, everyone does the dance they've learned on stage

5. Dress the part

- ⇒ Staff supervising Get Moving area to dress in gym gear



Morning Session

GET INVOLVED: Final menu of options

1. Information Stands on local clubs / community groups / charities / activities

- ⇒ Information on how to volunteer locally, e.g. drama, art, Scouts, music, SVP, Red Cross, First Response groups, Civil Defense, Meals-on-Wheels, Hope Foundation, Special Olympics centre, or anything else that may be specific to one's community.
- ⇒ Important—have option to sign up there and then, or provide information on how to get involved after the event
- ⇒ Information on how to get involved in Comhairle and about the AGM 2015
- ⇒ Information on how to get involved in planning committees for local events

2. Promote the work of local youth services

- ⇒ Videos showing what they do
- ⇒ Info on how to get involved / volunteer

3. How to be pro-active in your community

- ⇒ How to start a community activity group, e.g. Book club, walking group etc...
- ⇒ Start up a community art wall

4. Get involved in extra-curricular school activities

- ⇒ Local schools to post list of clubs available to get involved in such as chess, debating, music. Drama, art.... Have young people representing the groups there on the day to talk to participants and encourage to try out

Morning Session

GIVE: Final menu of options

1. Give your time to your community—information stands and local representatives on how to do this

⇒ Information stands with leaflets and merchandise such as wristbands, pens

2. Give Blood, Give Life

⇒ Have Blood Transfusion Service on site

3. Give something for free

⇒ Give a compliment—compliment cards

⇒ Give a hug—have signs or t-shirts with Free Hugs Here on them

⇒ Give a smile—Photo booth with pictures printed there and then

⇒ Make something to give to others—Arts & Crafts workshops

4. Give to charity

⇒ Give your unwanted clothes, toys, shoes etc... - charity boxes from local charities on site—need to contact them in advance to provide boxes and collection service

⇒ Food Drive: Give food to local homeless / Meals-on-Wheels charities—need to contact them in advance to provide boxes and collection service

5. Give your time

⇒ Buddy System: pair up with someone who came to event on their own

⇒ Give your time to someone else on the day



Afternoon Session

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Discussion on plans for National launch

- Suggested date: in week **22nd - 26th June 2015**—needs to pre-date the first of the Let's Go Mental 2015 regional events.
- A Steering Group meeting with the panel of experts will take place in DCYA at **2pm on 11th March** - this will involve getting their advice on what makes a good launch, what kind of venues work, how should it look, how can we make it stand out / promote it etc...
- A sub-group of National Executive members will be required to attend on this day. Those who put their names forward to attend as follows:

Maria Ferry

Max Lavelle

Dylan Kennedy

Lily Cheung

Andrew Duffy

Jane Hayes-Nally

Emma Moloney

Garreth O'Connor

Murray Kennedy

Cárthach O'Faoláin

John Sutton

Karyn to email all a reminder—need to confirm availability by Thurs. 26th Feb

Meeting with the Oireachtas cross-party group on Mental Health: 11am on 11th March

- As a direct result of the National Executive presentation to the Oireachtas Committee on Health and Children last May 2014, a meeting has been arranged in Leinster House on **Wed. 11th March**. Attending will be TDs and senators from the Oireachtas cross-party group on Mental Health, two members of the Participation Team and two National Executive members—the two members will be drawn from the 9 names above, subject to their availability to attend both meetings on 11th.
- The two names will be drawn from a hat on 26th Feb and will be emailed a notification by Karyn
- Anne will also invite our 5 link TDs and senators to attend this meeting
- The focus of this meeting will be on Your Comhairle Needs You 2015—see next page for more information

Afternoon Session

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY II:

Your Comhairle Needs You 2015: Wed 22nd April, 14:30—16:00

Provisional venue: AV Rooms, Leinster House

Information on what this event is about:

- *Your Comhairle Needs You* is an event which showcases the work of the National Executive to TDs and senators. It is hosted once per two-year term and each National Executive member is required to attend on the day,
- It gives a platform to Executive members to present on the work they've been doing on their recommendation from Dáil na nÓg, in our case the organisation of Let's Go Mental 2015.
- Approximately three members will be selected to make a presentation at this event, potentially one chairperson and two speakers. But this will be clarified at the meeting on the 11th.
- Once the presentations are over, there will be a Q&A session with the attending decision makers, and after that, the opportunity to meet individually with your local TDs and senators to discuss the progress of your regional Let's Go Mental event, as well as the potential to discuss topics of importance locally. There will also be a photo opportunity with those TDs and senators.
- This event will be an excellent opportunity to ask them to support your event locally and potentially to use their contacts to aid your Comhairle in raising much-needed funds
- Each National Executive member will be required to contact the TDs and senators from their own constituency to invite them to attend on the 22nd. An email template was drawn up by a sub-group at the end of this meeting and will be circulated to all by Karyn over the coming weeks. National Executive members will also be issued with an individual list of those TDs and senators, complete with contact emails and Twitter accounts. More info to follow.

NB: A sub-group will be commencing work on this presentation on the **11th March** after the Steering Committee meeting in DCYA, as per names on previous page. Our next full-group meeting on **Sat 21st March** will involve a number of sub-groups, some of whom will be continuing work on the presentations and promotion of Your Comhairle Needs You 2015



Afternoon Session

Formation of two sub-groups:

For the last session of the day, the group split into two sub-groups:

Group 1: Working on the communication from National Executive to Comhairle coordinators in relation to Let's Go Mental 2015

- An appeal to the goodwill of Comhairle coordinators to include Let's Go Mental 2015 as part of their programme for this year.
- This will be included in DCYA's email communication to coordinators

Group 2: Working on communication to TDs and senators re: Your Comhairle Needs You

- Sub-group worked on adapting 2013 email communication from the previous Executive members to make it relevant to Let's Go Mental 2015

Actions:

- Copies letter and draft email will be emailed to National Executive members in the next week.
- Karyn will issue an email of information to all National Executive members on how to proceed with the email communication to TDs and senators over the coming weeks.

Next full group meeting: Sat 21st March 2015



Sub-group meetings: 11th March 2015



Your Comhairle Needs You: 22nd April 2015