**Press Release: 06th June 2025**

**Men’s Sheds walking their way to Health ‘Shoulder to Shoulder’ for Men’s Health Week.**

To celebrate Men’s Health Week 2025 (9-15 June) the Irish Men’s Sheds Association has invited its 465 Sheds nationally to celebrate by hosting a “Slí” where men meet, walk and talk in their local community.

From Saturday 7th in Bantry to Friday 13th in Banagher, Sheds are coming together individually, as groups of Sheds or by county to connect, chat and enjoy the great outdoors – on greenways, forest trails, canal banks and in parks. This year there are seventeen Slí’s taking place all over Ireland!

The first Slí was hosted by Carraroe Men’s Shed back in June 2024 with a trip to Inis Oirr with Sheds from Galway and Mayo counties attending – there was a history walk, traditional music, craic and chat. Since then, the Slí has become a national event for Sheds to celebrate Men’s Health Week, herald the start of summer and come together and do what Sheds do best – Connect! Like each Shed, every Slí is different and shaped by the Men themselves.

Irish Men’s Sheds Association is supported by Sports Partnerships, County Councils and supporters in their local Communities to organise these fantastic events which offer Sheds and new potential Shed members to experience the potential benefits of being part of Sheds.

Men’s Health week is about shining a light on Men’s Health and encouraging all men to think and talk about their health in a positive way. This year’s theme “Shoulder to Shoulder - Connecting for Health” is all about the importance of connectivity and helping each other. Reminding everyone about the importance of not going it alone, that there are supports available and that it is important to take action. Be it personal action relating to your own health or reaching out and connecting to a service or group to help in your journey towards maintaining both a heathier physical and mental lifestyle.

Rebecca McLaughlin, Health & Well Being Irish Men’s Sheds Association said;

“It’s fantastic to see our Slí grow from one walk to many taking place this Men’s Health Week around Ireland. Being part of a Shed benefits individual Men but also their family, friends and communities – wouldn’t it be great if every Man could access a Shed in their own village or town. We are told consistently by Men that their Shed has given them a new lease of life and sense of purpose (besides a lot of craic!), they are truly unique spaces worth celebrating this Men’s Health Week”.

Pat Duff Organiser Sli Fingal, Volunteer Irish Men’s Sheds Association said;

“We have had great success with the Slí over the past two years, with numbers of men and sheds increasing steadily. This event gives men an opportunity to get out and exercise, to connect and share their experiences, and with a bit of luck, they might even increase their Vitamin D levels! We are very grateful to Fingal County Council and Healthy Ireland for their support, and to all the men who join us on the day”.

Biddy O’Neill, Dept. of Health said;

“Ireland was the first country in the world to adopt a National Men’s Health Policy, and there remains an urgent need to maintain a specific focus on men’s health. While men’s health overall has improved, men still have a lower life expectancy than women and higher mortality rates for the leading causes of death such as heart disease, cancer and suicide. Men’s Health Week gives us a significant and important opportunity to continue the momentum and excellent progress that has been achieved in Men’s Health in Ireland.

By recognising the reciprocal nature of women’s and men’s health, it becomes clear that policy measures designed to improve men’s health can impact not just on men’s lives, but can have a positive influence on the lives of women and children, and on society as a whole.

The success of the Men’s Shed movement demonstrates that the explicit focus on gender specific strategies is paying dividends in community engagement, capacity building, partnership and sustainability”.

**Locations for SLÍ 2025**

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| Meelick Weir, Galway |
| Slí na Slánte, Hill of Tara, Meath |
| Clonbur Woods Park Run, Joyce Country, Galway |
| Newbridge House, Donabate, Dublin |
| Walking to Turbert Island, Cavan |
| Rochestown, Cork |  |
| The Green, Limerick |  |
| Waterford Greenway |  |
| Cloghan Lakes, Offaly |  |
| Carrigaline River Walkway, Cork |  |
| Introduction to Walking Football, Ringmahon Rangers, Cork |  |
| Derrybilla Labyrinth, Littleton Thurles, Tipperary |  |
| Bray to Greystones-Eco fitnness by Korina Duffy, Wicklow |  |
| Balla Mart, Swinford, Mayo  |  |

 **ENDS**

**Notes for Editors:**

**International Men’s Health Week:**

International Men's Health Week (MHW) always begins on the Monday before Father's Day and ends on Father's Day itself. MHW is celebrated in many European countries, as well as in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and a number of other places worldwide. The overall aims of the week are to:

* Heighten awareness of preventable health problems for males of all ages.
* Support men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices / activities.
* Encourage the early detection and treatment of health difficulties in males.

But why is there a need to hold a Men's Health Week? ... Males constitute almost 50% of the population on the island of Ireland and, therefore, deserve to have a gender lens focused upon their specific health needs. Research clearly shows that these men experience a disproportionate burden of ill-health and die too young ...

* Men die younger than women do.
* Males have higher death rates than females for almost all of the leading causes of death and at all ages.
* Men’s poorer lifestyles are responsible for a high proportion of chronic diseases.
* Late presentation to health services can lead to a large number of problems becoming untreatable ...

Indeed, while many of these conditions are preventable, their prevalence amongst men may, in fact, rise in the future.

Each year, there is also a specific theme. During 2025, the theme for the island of Ireland will be 'Shoulder-to-Shoulder - Connecting for Health'.

**Irish Men’s Sheds Association (IMSA):**

Men’s Sheds are safe, supportive and confidential spaces for Men to share their feelings and discuss things they couldn’t imagine discussing outside any other four walls. Sheds have saved lives. For many, the Shed is the ‘Why’ that gets them out of bed in the morning and gives their life meaning.

The Men’s Shed Movement began in Australia over thirty years ago and arrived in Ireland around 2009 – The IMSA was formed in 2011 and represents over 500 sheds on the island of Ireland. Ireland has the highest number of Sheds per capita of anywhere in the world, we are global leaders in the Men’s Shed movement with emerging ‘model Sheds’ in Prisons and in 3rd level institutions.

* 465 Sheds registered in the ROI
* 56 Sheds registered with IMSA in Northern Ireland
* 36+ emerging Sheds (waiting to register)
* 8,000 - 10,000 Men a week go in and out of Irish Sheds

Over 80% of Men say they ‘feel better’ for being part of a Shed and the environment itself is undeniably ‘health-promoting’. Each Shed is an individual as the Men who choose to come together to make a Shed - based on shared interests like boatbuilding, bee-keeping or biodiversity. Connection (and a kettle!) is the fuel of all Men’s Sheds.

Sheds offer Men social, psychological, emotional and physical Health & Well Being supports. The success of Sheds in Ireland has been extraordinary and builds on the country's leadership in having one of the first National Men's Health policies.

Connection alone is reason enough for a Shed in every Irish community for Men (who we also know die younger, have higher death rates for almost all leading causes of death and who present later to services and supports). Ireland currently has the highest rate of loneliness in Europe and the third highest incidence of adult mental illness across 36 countries in Europe, one in four people with a mental health issue. We believe every Man should have access if he wishes to a Shed in his local community.

But there’s more to Sheds than tea and chat. Walk into your community Shed and you are likely to discover a bustling hub of creativity and transformation for local Men navigating key changes or transition in their lives. Sheds offer spaces for life-long learning, skills sharing and value people as they age. They are rich in knowledge, experience and encourage ongoing contribution ‘shoulder to shoulder’ with each other and in their communities. Single, Widowed, Retired, Lonely, Socially Isolated, Carer or Cared for? There is a welcome in a Shed, respectful and without judgement. Sheds are places where you don’t lose any previous identity, you gain a new one – a ‘Shedder’.

In 2018, the Irish Men’s Sheds Association received the European Citizen’s Award after being nominated by Irish MEPs. The IMSA was named as one of the twelve Sustainable Development Goals Champions by the Irish Government in 2019.

Over the past decade, Men’s Sheds have become a vital part of Ireland’s community infrastructure. Sheds offer men an opportunity to meet in a supportive, collaborative space, improve their health and wellbeing, and contribute to their communities.

More information is available at [www.menssheds.ie](https://menssheds.ie/)