

Progress Report 2022



Sláintecare.
**Healthy
Communities**



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



Rialtas Áitiúil Éireann
Local Government Ireland

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Progress Report 2022

Foreword

Minister for Health
Stephen Donnelly TD



The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme is one of the priority focus areas identified in the Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan. The Programme represents a new way of working to reduce health inequalities in Ireland. Our ambition as a Government is to do everything we can to improve the health and wellbeing of the population, ensuring that no one is left behind. Sláintecare Healthy Communities does this by placing an emphasis on 19 of the most disadvantaged communities in Ireland, empowering those who are most marginalised to achieve their own health and wellbeing goals.

Good population health and wellbeing involves more than just delivering health services. The conditions in which we are born, grow, work, live and age can influence our health more than healthcare or lifestyle choices. To address these social determinants of health, the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme takes a life course and place-based approach where these factors are created, building communities where people can thrive.

Addressing health inequalities is key to achieving the Healthy Ireland vision, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, and where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level in society. Achieving this vision requires a whole of government and whole of society approach. Sláintecare Healthy Communities is delivered through a collaborative effort by multiple Government departments, the Health Service Executive (HSE), local government, and various local partnerships, tackling health inequalities based on needs at a local level.

The greatest strength of the Healthy Ireland Framework is the continued commitment across Government to work in partnership toward better health and wellbeing. Sláintecare Healthy Communities is an exemplar of this cross-sectoral collaboration, whilst ensuring that equity and fairness is central to everything we do.

I am pleased to present this progress report outlining the Programme's achievements in 2022. I wish to thank everyone involved in the delivery of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, including Government departments, local government, the HSE, and all the local partnerships. I welcome the evidence provided in this progress report which will inform future decision-making around scaling up of the Programme to more areas of need around the country.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Donnelly'. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Minister Stephen Donnelly TD

Foreword

Minister of State in Department of Health with responsibility for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy
Hildegarde Naughton TD



I am delighted to present this first Progress Report of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, which offers inspiring insights into the programme's outputs and achievements in its first year. The Programme is benefitting communities across Ireland in greatest need, where health inequalities are most evident and where health interventions can have the greatest impact.

The Programme for Government: Our Shared Future provided a clear intention to address cross-sectoral inequalities. In 2021, my colleagues Minister Donnelly and Minister Feighan jointly launched Sláintecare Healthy Communities, which represents a unique collaboration between multiple Government departments, local government and their partners, and the HSE. The Programme takes a place-based approach to tackling health inequalities in 19 communities across Ireland.

Health inequalities are unnecessary, unfair, and avoidable. It is unfair that a child born today in one community in Ireland will have a shorter life expectancy and a higher risk of chronic disease than a child born in another community. This needs to change. Sláintecare Healthy Communities is an initial step in bringing about this change and ensuring health equality and fairness for everyone in Ireland, regardless of where they live, their income, gender, or ethnicity.

The key to the success of Sláintecare Healthy Communities so far is the collaborative and place-based approach, delivered by working through existing community and local authority structures. Local partners have the relationships and trust of the community and know better than anyone else the strengths of their community, as well as the challenges faced. Health inequalities present complex problems, and complex problems require innovative and collaborative solutions. The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme provides the mechanism for the local authority, the HSE and local partnerships to work together collaboratively to help ensure that people can access the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

This Progress Report demonstrates how this cross-sectoral and place-based approach can effectively support the delivery of the Sláintecare policy objectives and improve the health and wellbeing of our community members. I am very pleased to support this innovative and important Programme and look forward to seeing more positive outcomes for our communities.

Hildegarde Naughton

Minister Hildegarde Naughton TD

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1.0 Why Sláintecare Healthy Communities?

“The goal of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme is to improve the long-term health and wellbeing of the most disadvantaged communities in Ireland.”¹

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities (SHC) Programme is a Healthy Ireland initiative to reduce health inequalities in Ireland. Launched in 2021, the Programme provides health and wellbeing services and community development initiatives in 19 community areas across Ireland where health inequalities are most evident.

Health inequalities exist when a subgroup of the population suffers a disproportionate burden of ill health and premature death compared to the community as a whole. Health inequalities are unnecessary, unfair, and avoidable.

Compared to other members of society, groups who are poorer or disadvantaged generally experience more illness during their lifetime, which negatively influences wellbeing and quality of life. The impact of health inequalities is an everyday lived experience confronting people from disadvantaged and marginalised communities.

People who experience the highest deprivation face the worst health inequalities². The CSO research paper, ‘Mortality differentials in Ireland 2016-17’, identifies that persons in the most deprived quintile of our population have the lowest life expectancy.

Overall Life Expectancy by Quintile 2016–2017 in Ireland

	Males	Females
All	82.0	85.5
First Quintile (least deprived)	84.4	87.7
Second Quintile	83.2	86.5
Third Quintile	82.2	85.7
Fourth Quintile	81.9	84.9
Fifth Quintile (most deprived)	79.4	83.2

The life expectancy at birth of males living in the most deprived areas in the State was 79.4 years in 2016/2017 compared with 84.4 years for those living in the most affluent areas. The corresponding figures for females were 83.2 and 87.7 years (see Table above). The differential between female and male life expectancy (3.8 years) was greatest in the most deprived areas.

1 Sláintecare Implementation Strategy and Action Plan 2021-23

2 Public Health England (2019) Health inequalities: place-based approaches to reduce inequalities

	15–34	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65–74	75+
Deprived areas							
Men	87	92	85	81	59	57	55
Women	94	92	81	89	73	69	59
Affluent areas							
Men	96	93	92	92	81	91	73
Women	93	94	94	90	87	83	59

Proportion rating own health as good or very good (by gender, age and deprivation – %)

The Healthy Ireland Survey 2017 showed that levels of smoking, binge drinking and obesity in areas of deprivation are higher than in areas of affluence. The 2017 survey also showed stark differences in self-reported health between deprived and affluent areas, especially in older age cohorts.

People who experience deprivation live shorter lives, and their lives are lived longer with the burden of disease. A recent report from the National Cancer Registry on Cancer Inequalities in Ireland³ showed higher age standardised incidence of cancer for people living in deprived areas and a higher mortality risk within five years of diagnosis. More importantly they found that whilst cancer incidence rates have fallen and survival rates have improved over time across the majority of cancers and for all sectors of society, there is no evidence of any reduction in disparities between those living in the least and the most deprived areas. Similarly, a recent report by the Economic and Social Research Institute⁴ confirms that those in less advantaged socio-economic status positions have higher standardised mortality rates than those in more advantaged socio-economic status positions.

The cost of health inequalities is significant and can be measured in both human terms, lost years of life and active life, and in economic terms, the cost to the economy of additional illness. These differences in mortality and life expectancy are unfair and avoidable.

1.2 Policy Context

One of the fundamental principles of Sláintecare is Prevention and Public Health. This is achieved by promoting health and wellbeing and preventing illness.

This principle embodies all that Healthy Ireland seeks to achieve. Healthy Ireland has been a core framework for the implementation of Sláintecare. As outlined in the Sláintecare Action Plan, in addition to supporting people to live healthier lives, prevention of illness is a vital element in reducing the demand for hospital services and improving quality of life.

3 Bambury N, Brennan A, McDevitt J, Walsh PM. (2023) Cancer inequalities in Ireland by deprivation, 2004-2018: a National Cancer Registry report. NCRI, Cork, Ireland.

4 Duffy, K et al (2022) Unequal Chances? Inequalities in Mortality in Ireland, Research Series Number 145 September 2022

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme fits under one of two major reform programmes in the Sláintecare Implementation Strategy and Action Plan 2021–2023. The overall Reform Programme, under which it is contained has the overall goal to address health inequalities. The health inequalities reform programme also includes the:

- Development of a citizen care masterplan, which will provide for a health service resource allocation model that is based on more than a per capita basis.
- The introduction and development of Regional Health Areas.
- The implementation of the Obesity Policy and Action Plan.

These are key elements to addressing health inequalities and therefore Sláintecare Healthy Communities needs to be seen as an integral part of this suite of reforms.

Sláintecare Fundamental Principles

01 Patient is Paramount
All care is planned and provided so that the patient/ service user is paramount, ensuring appropriate care pathways and seamless transition backed-up by full patient records and information.

02 Timely Access
To all health and social care according to medical need.

03 Prevention and Public Health
Patients accessing care at the most appropriate, cost effective service level with a strong emphasis on prevention and public health.

04 Free at the Point of Delivery
Care provided free at the point of delivery, based entirely on clinical need.

05 Workforce
The health service workforce is appropriate, accountable, flexible, well-resourced, supported and valued.

06 Public Money and Interest
Public money is only spent in the public interest for the public good (ensuring value for money, integration, oversight, accountability and correct incentives).

07 Engagement
Create a modern, responsive integrated public health system, comparable to other European countries, through building long-term public and political confidence in the delivery and implementation of this plan.

08 Accountability
Effective organisational alignment and good governance are central to the organisation and functioning of the health system.

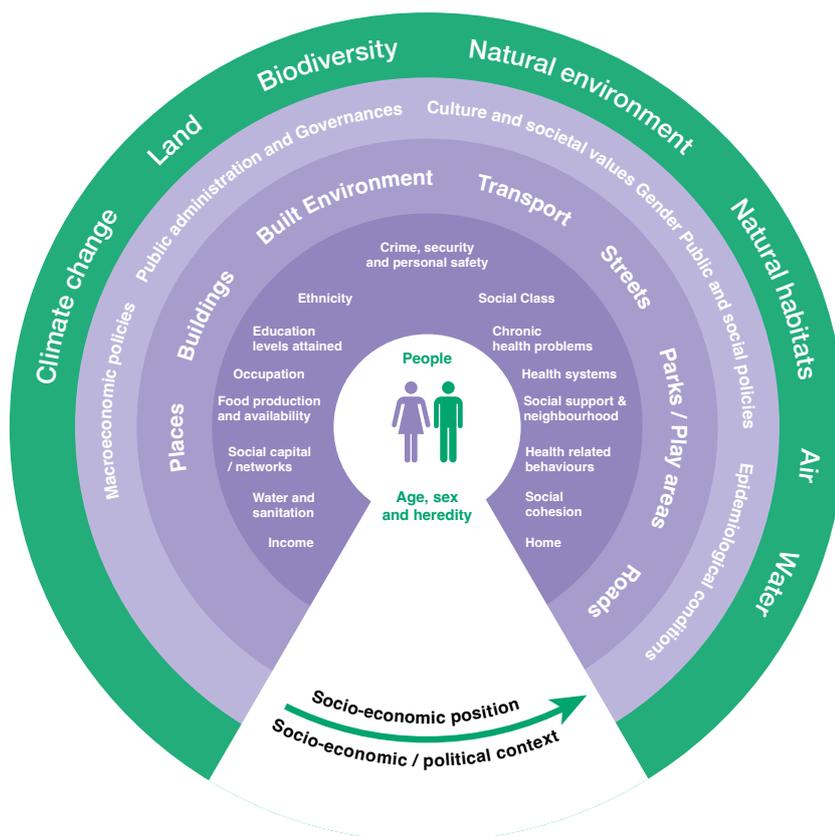
The Sláintecare Action Plan acknowledges directly that there are many groups of people who require tailored health and social care interventions, and that health inequalities are compounded by the wider determinants of health and that is why the Programme is a priority reform for the health service.

Sláintecare Healthy Communities is also central to achieving the new theme of reducing health inequalities contained in the Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021–2025.

1.3 The Determinants of Health

The social determinants of health are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. These are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.

Good physical and mental health are key to an individual’s wellbeing and quality of life. A variety of factors influence such health conditions. The World Health Organisation note that “The social conditions in which people live powerfully influence their chances to be healthy. Indeed, factors such as poverty, food insecurity, social exclusion and discrimination, poor housing, unhealthy early childhood conditions and low occupational status are important determinants of most diseases, deaths, and health inequalities between and within countries”.



The Determinants of Health

Research shows that the social determinants can be more important than health care or lifestyle choices in influencing health. For example, numerous studies suggest that social determinants of health account for between 30-55% of health outcomes⁵. In addition, estimates show that sectors outside health contribute more to population health outcomes than the contribution from the health sector.

Addressing the social determinants of health appropriately is fundamental for improving health and reducing longstanding inequities in health, and requires action by all sectors and civil society.

In order to address the social determinants of health, Sláintecare Healthy Communities takes a life course and place-based approach in relation to where these factors are created.

5 World Health Organisation (2023) https://www.who.int/health-topics/social-determinants-of-health#tab=tab_1

1.4 Place-Based Approach

Health inequalities are a complex problem, they are not caused by one single issue but a complex mix of environmental and social factors⁶. Tackling complex problems requires an integrated approach. The Programme therefore seeks to solve this by creating a platform to enable multiple agencies and Government Departments to collaborate at a local level.

Sláintecare Healthy Communities is focussed on defined geographic areas of high deprivation, where interventions can be tailored according to the contextual factors within these areas with strong community engagement. This enables the provision of specific and integrated interventions that will have greater impact than general population focussed interventions.

In Sláintecare Healthy Communities areas, targeted health-specific interventions are being offered by the HSE, while non-health government departments, their agencies and delivery partners, work to address the wider determinants of health and provide supports for the benefit of the communities, working through existing community and local authority structures.

By limiting the scope to specific geographic areas, the programme also aims to create the ability to prioritise resources and investments and create the conditions for alignment between multiple stakeholders. Using a place-based approach also enables the programme to consider critical stages and transitions where large differences can be made in population health, rather than focusing on individual conditions at a single stage in life.

1.5 National Launch and Implementation

In October 2021, at the Darndale Bell Centre, Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly and Minister for Public Health, Wellbeing and the National Drugs Strategy, Frank Feighan, launched the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme.

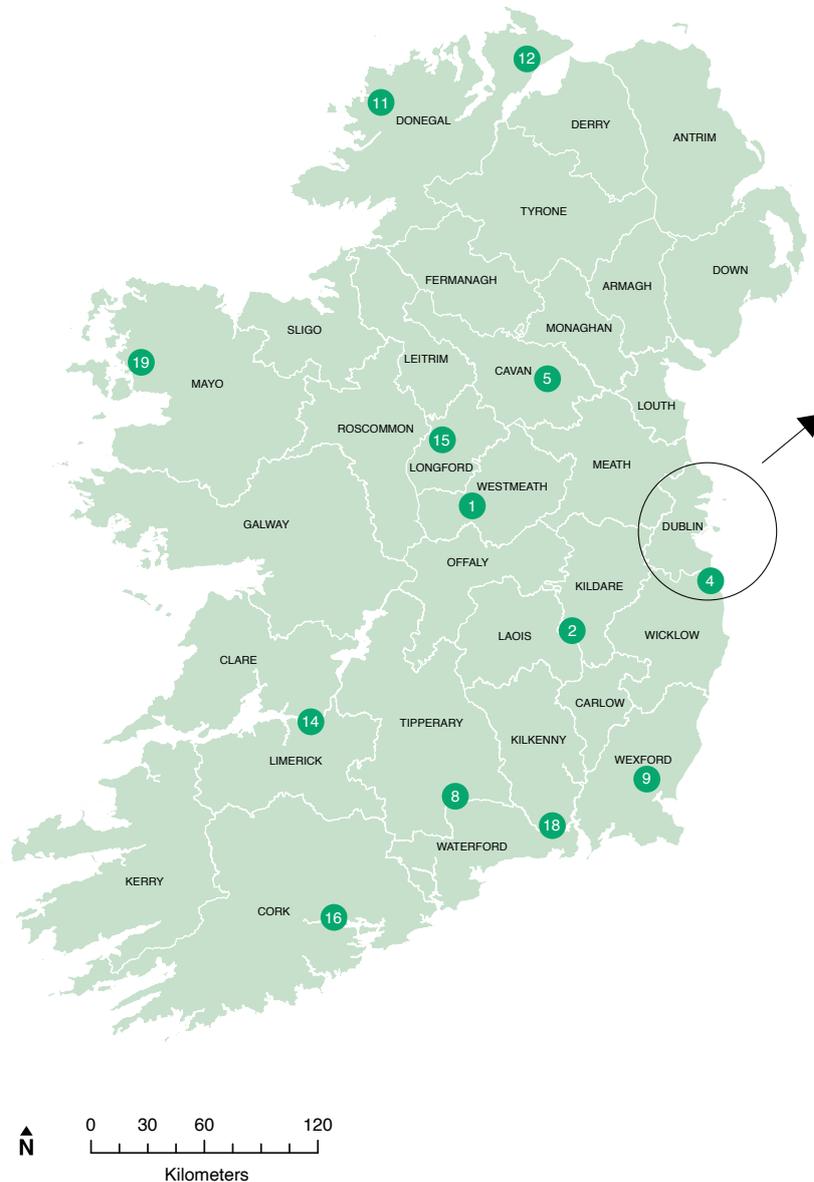


Sláintecare Healthy Communities National Launch, Darndale

The Programme has a budget of €13m per annum. This is being used to provide health and wellbeing services via community-based teams employed by the HSE, and through Local Development Companies and Family Resource Centres (FRCs). In addition to these health supports, the Department of Health (DOH) have put in place Service Level Agreements with each of the 14 Local Authorities in which the communities are located to employ a Local Development Officer, with Seed Funding to implement initiatives that address some of the social determinants of health. Since the launch in 2021, national oversight functions have also been established within both the HSE and the local authority sector.

2.0 Sláintecare Healthy Communities Overview

Central to the programme is a focus on specific communities living in specific geographic areas. Both data and on-the-ground experience were utilised to inform the process of selecting the sites for inclusion in the Programme.



Dublin



Sláintecare Community Mapping

1. Athlone and Mullingar (Westmeath)
2. Athy (Kildare)
3. Ballymun (Dublin)
4. Bray (Wicklow)
5. Cavan Town and County (Cavan)
6. Cherry Orchard & Ballyfermot (Dublin)
7. Clondalkin (Dublin)
8. Clonmel (Tipperary)
9. Enniscorthy & Wexford Town (Wexford)
10. Finglas and Cabra (Dublin)
11. Gaeltacht (Donegal)
12. Inishowen (Donegal)
13. Kilmore and Priorswood (Dublin)
14. Limerick City (Limerick)
15. Longford Town (Longford)
16. North Cork City (Cork)
17. Tallaght (Dublin)
18. Waterford City (Waterford)
19. West Mayo (Mayo)

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Areas

The process to identify the Programme communities was initiated by the Health Intelligence Unit in the HSE utilising the Health Atlas⁷ application. The Health Atlas provides detailed profiles by small area and electoral district level. They applied the Pobal HP Deprivation⁸ index at these levels to identify the areas with highest deprivation scores. Given the centrality of Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)⁹ in the reduction of poverty, promoting social inclusion and equality, and the role that is played by the local partnership companies¹⁰ in the delivery of SICAP, these areas were aligned with the 51 SICAP Lot areas.

Finally, given their knowledge across the various agencies and resources that are in place, local authorities were consulted to validate the selection of the areas to ensure that they represented actual communities, and that the programme would be able to be operationalised in these areas.

2.1 Programme Structure

There are two key SHC delivery agents in each area: the Local Authority and the HSE. The services delivered in each area are based on the specific needs of each community.

The Local Authority are responsible for community development and community engagement initiatives which support health and wellbeing, promote healthier lifestyle behaviours, and increase access to health services. Within each Local Authority, a Local Development Officer has been employed to engage with the community, assess community needs, and oversee the delivery of the Programme.

The HSE deliver a suite of core services within each SHC area: Social Prescribing; Parenting Programmes; Healthy Food Made Easy & Community Food Nutrition Worker; Quit Smoking Programme & Stop Smoking Advisor and Making Every Contact Count. These programmes were chosen based on the needs of the community (for example, there is a high prevalence of smoking in many of the SHC areas). A HSE SHC Coordinator has been employed in each area to give local leadership to this work.

Both the Local Development Officer and the HSE SHC Coordinator work collaboratively with various local partners to deliver these services. Partners include Local Development Companies and Family Resource Centres, among many others.

7 <https://hseresearch.ie/data-sources/>

8 <http://trutzhaase.eu/deprivation-index/the-2016-pobal-hp-deprivation-index-for-small-areas/>

9 <https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/6609f4-social-inclusion-and-community-activation-programme-sicap/>

10 <https://ildn.ie/>

2.2 Funding

The SHC Programme is funded by the Department of Health. To establish the Programme, a once-off Enhancement Fund of €250,000 was allocated to each of the 19 SHC areas, via the Local Authorities, to support improvements to the built environment. Local Authorities identified projects which could positively impact on the health and wellbeing of community members and provide added value from a social determinants of health perspective.

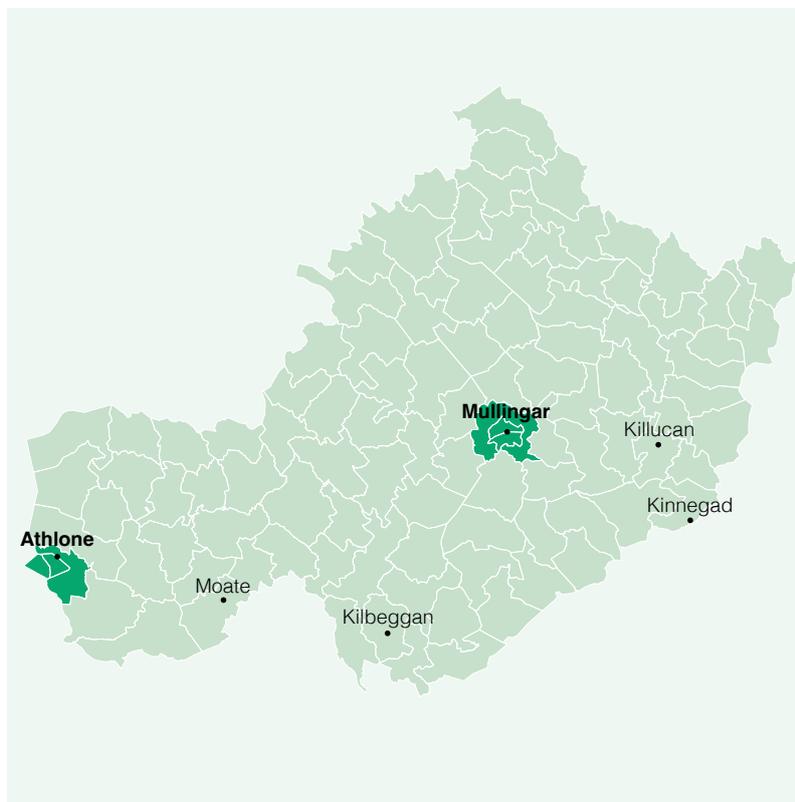
An additional Seed Fund of €75,000 was allocated to each SHC area in 2022, via the Local Authorities, to support the work of the Local Development Officer and to fund projects identified by the community that will support health and wellbeing. The Local Development Officer oversees the expenditure of both the Enhancement Fund and the Seed Fund.

Separate funding is provided by the Department of Health to the HSE to deliver a suite of core services within each SHC area also.

3.0 Sláintecare Healthy Communities

Since its launch in 2021, Sláintecare Healthy Communities has become well established in each of the 19 areas. As the Programme responds to local needs, the services delivered, outputs, and achievements are also specific to each area. Key achievements for each SHC area in 2022 are highlighted in this section.

3.1 Athlone and Mullingar (Westmeath)



Local Development Officer

Brigid Geoghegan

HSE Coordinator

Anthony O’Prey

Electoral Districts

Mullingar North Urban, Mullingar South Urban, Mullingar Rural, Athlone West Urban, Athlone East Urban, Athlone East Rural

Map of Athlone and Mullingar (Westmeath) SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The approach taken by Westmeath County Council in delivering the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme has provided key learnings for the Programme nationally, with access and addressing health inequalities at the forefront. High risk factors to the health and wellbeing of the local population were identified and Westmeath County Council is collaboratively implementing targeted initiatives to tackle these challenges from within the communities.

With 11 distinct areas within the towns of Athlone and Mullingar (Revitalising Areas through Planning Investment and Development “RAPID” designated areas), there was a breadth of knowledge and strong working relationships already in place within the Westmeath Sláintecare Healthy Communities areas. The Enhancement Fund opportunity sought to build upon this by resourcing some innovative projects for the local communities to tackle identified health inequalities. The development of community hubs within both towns enabled delivery of health services including the HSE core programmes, community and family services, and wrap around supports for the local community.

Sláintecare Healthy Communities Seed Fund was combined with the Enhancement Fund to further impact and support the effort within the communities with funding to help fit out and enhance the community hub concepts. A Community Resilience Transport Initiative in Athlone is another great example of responding to local need in accessing services by providing a safe, secure, and cost neutral/free transport service for residents and groups within the area. The approaches taken by the Community section within Westmeath County Council gives strong credibility to the Sláintecare mantra that it is possible to provide people in communities with the opportunities to reach their health and wellbeing potential when the right resources are provided, at the right time, and in the right places.

Grange Community Hub, Mullingar

Case study



Youth Work Ireland Midlands (Mullingar) is based in the Grange Resource Centre, Mullingar and works in partnership with the local community groups to provide a holistic wrap around service to all residents in the seven adjoining local authority housing estates on the west side of Mullingar.

Working together, the local community groups provide activities and programmes for all the community with a strong focus on achieving better outcomes in physical health, mental health, and wellbeing. This is achieved through facilitating talks, interagency interventions and supported activities and it was through these mediums that the need for additional dedicated space was recognised. The requirement to accommodate small group/individual interventions and programmes was responded to through the Enhancement Fund opportunity and following community consultation it was agreed to deliver a modular style unit which could be placed in the grounds of the existing community centre but would still provide a dedicated space for health initiatives in the wider sense.



Community Hub in the Grange Resource Centre, Mullingar

The Grange Community Hub has been in place since March 2022 and in hindsight, the local community cannot see how they managed before they had this facility. The Hub is in constant use facilitating initiatives such as one-to-one sessions with external services which include Midlands Youth Drug & Alcohol Support Project, Traveller health clinics, TUSLA family meetings and small group and individual interventions to young people from the local community. The Hub is still connected to the local community centre but also allows a degree of privacy where more acute interventions can be facilitated. The benefit is already being seen in the community, but the real impact will become more visible as the services develop and flow down to the next generation, their peers, family, and wider community.

HSE programmes in the Westmeath area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Midland Regional Youth Service

Social Prescribing

Athlone Family Resource Centre

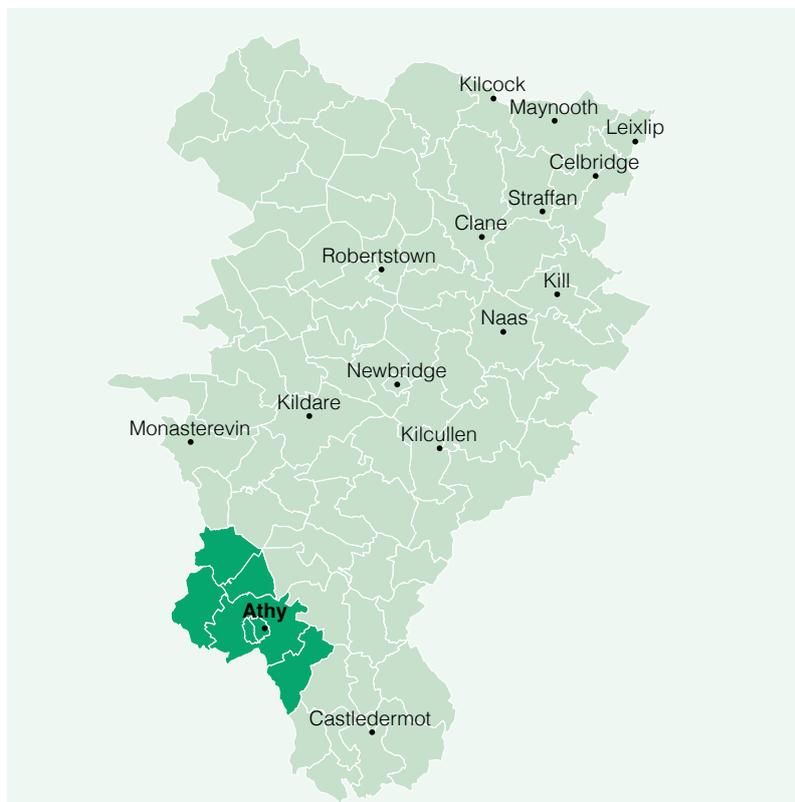
Parenting Programme

Barnardos Athlone (Triple P)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Westmeath Community Development CLG

3.2 Athy (Kildare)



Local Development Officer

Maria Healy

HSE Coordinator

Áine Buggy

Electoral Districts

Athy West Urban, Athy East Urban, Athy Rural, Churchtown, Grangemellon, Bert, Kilberry

Map of Athy SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

Athy demonstrated strong delivery across some of the key priorities of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme in 2022 with public realm and accessibility works for the People's Park prioritised under the Enhancement Fund, providing a solid base for the programme to progress.

Kildare County Council built upon this, strongly supporting the Local Development Officer to reach out to the community and develop relationships with a range of stakeholders to develop targeted initiatives that encouraged greater use of the enhanced local infrastructure. Projects that enabled uptake of the HSE targeted programmes, as well as physical literacy interventions, were part of the Seed Fund projects that were developed, and there was also a focus on building strong relationships with key local organisations to improve service outcomes. Some examples are:

- The sensory garden development at the Peter McVerry Family Hub. This garden concept encompasses all five senses to stimulate development for children with additional needs.
- A strategic digital health & wellbeing opportunity was developed with the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland to support the local community to engage and implement healthier lifestyle choices and will inform a coach-led app to be developed from the project.

Looking ahead, Kildare County Council will be examining areas such as the local environment, food insecurity and mental health initiatives as key initial actions for 2023 as well as ensuring that wellbeing is a prominent part of the Kildare Local Economic and Community Plan.

Athy Youth Investment Programme

Case study



The Youth Investment programme is aimed at children and young people aged 5-18 years experiencing the greatest disadvantage in the Athy community, engaging them in local, accessible, and fun activities which utilise community spaces and amenities. The programme targets the increased participation of young Travellers, those experiencing poverty, family addiction, unemployment, and disability with the aim of developing positive community relationships and encouraging long-term engagement in activities and community groups that improve health, wellbeing, and overall childhood experiences.



Athy Youth Investment Programme



Children's Activities at Athy Youth Investment Programme

A strong network of Kildare County Council staff focused on Athy including the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Local Development Officer, the Municipal District Community Worker, Creative Places Coordinator, and the Sports Hub Coordinator – all coming together to develop a programme responding to the range of needs identified after a wide engagement

and consultation process. Utilising local resources and existing strong relationships was an important determinant for the programme to succeed and 80 young people aged 5-16 years were engaged in four days of activities within Athy in August 2022. An evaluation was carried out with all participants which identified further needs and interests and, based on the outcomes of the evaluation, a programme for the period of September – December was developed.

The Youth Investment Programme was evaluated in December 2022. Outcomes of this evaluation highlighted the need for further health and wellbeing activities for children and young people within the Athy area, specifically those aged 5-8 years and young Travellers. Creative Arts, water sports and football were identified as key activities of interest. The Sláintecare Local Development Officer, in collaboration with the Local Sports Partnership, Youth Service, Traveller Action Project Family Resource Centre and Creative Places Athy, are working towards further supporting the delivery of these targeted activities within the local community in 2023.

A specific follow-on piece has been developed, and will continue into 2023, for a group of 12 Traveller young people to support their personal development and wellbeing through drama and theatre skills.

HSE programmes in the Athy area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

County Kildare LEADER Partnership

Social Prescribing

County Kildare LEADER Partnership

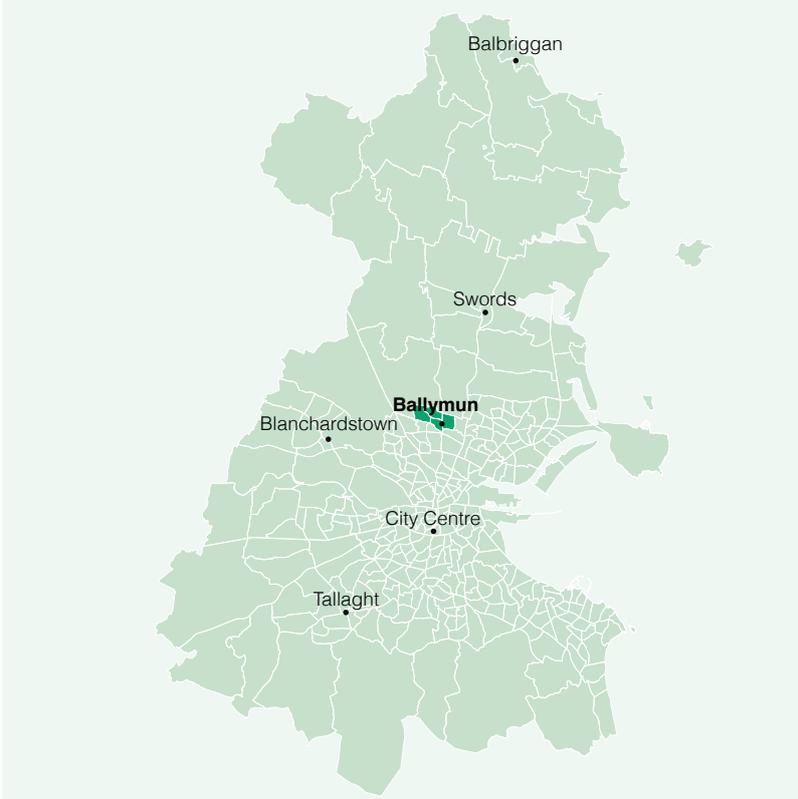
Parenting Programme

Athy Family Resource Centre

Healthy Food Made Easy

County Kildare LEADER Partnership

3.3 Ballymun (Dublin)



Local Development Officer
Patricia Tallon

HSE Coordinator
Lorraine McGowan

Electoral Districts
Ballymun A, Ballymun B, Ballymun C, Ballymun D

Map of Ballymun SHC area
■ Sláintecare Healthy Communities
• Settlements
■ Electoral Divisions

The Ballymun SHC Programme’s use of the Enhancement Fund prepared the ground for the Local Development Officer to onboard with good effect providing enhanced physical activity infrastructure within Balcurris Park. A number of community events within an end of year health and wellbeing summit offered the local community opportunities to better understand health determinants with health screening and awareness initiatives provided as part of the event. Similarly, the well-attended launch of the Ballymun Programme in December 2022 revealed the strong partnership between Dublin City Council, the HSE, community partners and the local Ballymun community.

A trauma-informed Ballymun training initiative was another example of the Dublin City Council’s collaborative approach in responding to local need and addressing the building blocks of health within communities. Plans for 2023 include a comprehensive area profile mapping exercise and health literacy checks and training linked with the social prescribing service.

Ballymun Play Therapy Project

Case study



The Ballymun Play Therapy project began in Our Lady of Victories Boys school in April 2021. It originally set out as a pilot project, with one Play Therapist and three children. At present the project has expanded to four self-employed Play Therapists working across seven schools with 36 children from the Ballymun area.

Play therapy provides a child with an opportunity to 'play out' their thoughts, feelings, and problems just as, in certain types of adult therapy, an individual 'talks out' their difficulties. Children enter into a dynamic therapeutic relationship with the therapist that enables them to express themselves, explore and make sense of the world in which they live, and resolve any difficult or painful experiences through the medium of play.

The need to provide play therapy onsite in schools was identified by YoungBallymun, who work intensively with families in the area, and the Primary Principals' Network. A survey among the principals of 11 primary schools identified that more than 300 children could benefit from play therapy. Sláintecare Healthy Communities Seed Fund from the Ballymun Programme enabled the expansion of the project to the four primary schools that were not availing of the project owing to resource issues.



Ballymun Play Therapy

Testimonials

From a mother

"His Mam reports a happier child at home with less aggressive outbursts. She also noticed this increase in confidence and self-esteem at home. This led her to seek therapy for her other child when that child was experiencing difficulties".

From a school Principal

"This early intervention evidence-based practice will change the lives of the children they work with. The children in these areas might never have had the opportunity to engage in therapy and their parents may never have really understood the messages behind the child's behaviours. Play Therapy in the schools is not only impacting the children in therapy but their families, the teachers, and the other children in their class".

HSE programmes in the Ballymun area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Dublin North-West Area Partnership

Social Prescribing

Ballymun Family Resource Centre

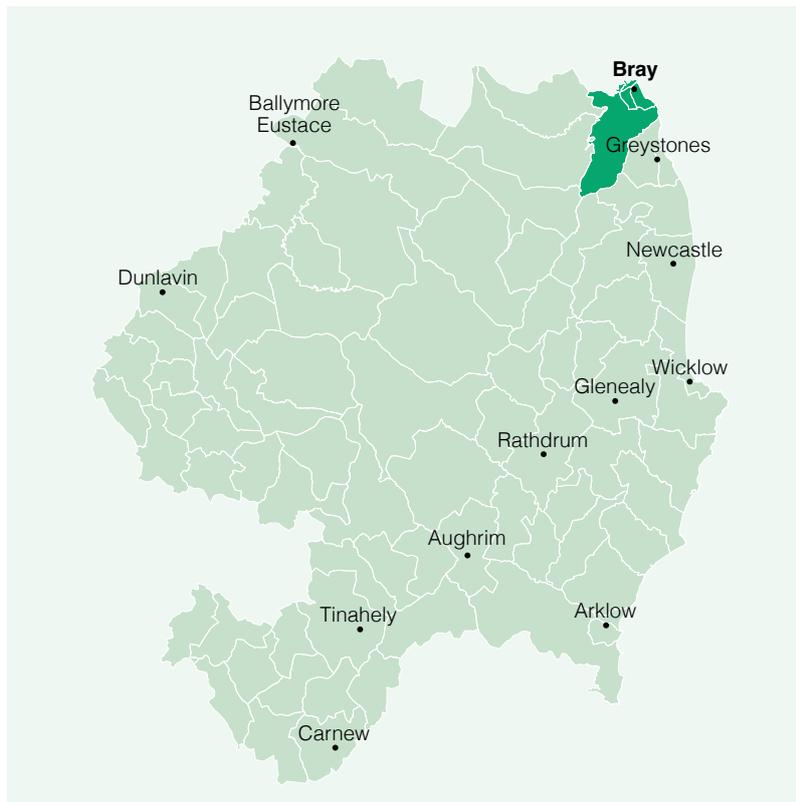
Parenting Programme

YoungBallymun (Parents Plus)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Dublin North-West Area Partnership

3.4 Bray (Wicklow)



Local Development Officer

Meadhbh Cahill

HSE Coordinator

Emer Morahan

Electoral Districts

Rathmichael (Bray),
Bray No. 1, Bray No. 2,
Bray No. 3, Kilmacanoge

Map of Bray (Wicklow) SHC Areas

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

Supporting and delivering improved access and opportunities, particularly in the early childhood area, was an important focus for the Bray Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme in 2022. Using the Enhancement Fund to good effect, Wicklow County Council delivered important wellbeing infrastructure in the Ballywaltrim and Little Bray areas. This included the provision of play and amenity equipment and community kitchens to enable the delivery of healthy eating and cooking courses and the HSE programmes.

A key part of the Local Development Officer’s activity during the year was in furthering the concept of a health and wellbeing hub for the Fassaroe/Little Bray area which explores the repurposing of an existing vacant HSE building. The Seed Fund was used to scope out the concept further and the vision for the Healthy Community Hub is of a locally accessible, inclusive community facility responsive to changing community needs and delivering a range of health protecting and promoting services.

Similarly, the Seed Fund was granted towards the redevelopment of an unused outdoor space to create an all-weather outdoor play area for the community crèche. The focus on early years was further evidenced with trauma-informed care training provided to staff in the early years’ services from Bray’s Seed Fund allocation.

The Bray site was the first Sláintecare Healthy Communities local programme to be launched in June 2022 and the level of local collaboration and activity was very evident at Ballywaltrim Community Centre. A continued focus on Little Bray and furthering the Healthy Community Hub and addressing food poverty and the physical environment are but some of the areas that the Bray Local Development Officer will be progressing in 2023.

Bray Health and Wellbeing Partnership & Engagement

Case study



This case study details the result of relationships developed, opportunities seized, and activities undertaken over the course of the Bray Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme so far. It started with Wicklow County Council partnering with the Public Participation Network (PPN) to conduct a series of joint community consultations to feed into both the PPN's Vision for Community Wellbeing and Wicklow's Local Economic & Community Plan and ensuring the involvement of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Local Development Officer to support meaningful engagement with the hardest to reach communities in Wicklow.

This opportunity for collaboration was seized upon by the Local Development Officer and the County Wicklow Health and Wellbeing Partnership was established to improve coherence and join up activity where possible. The partnership quickly became a recognised structure and was valuable in the creation of a successful application for a Physical Activity for Health post along with assisting the Bray Community Addiction Team to pilot the HSE Healthy Food Made Easy and Physical Activity sessions as part of their programme. Feedback on the pilot elements will inform the potential for their inclusion on a sustained basis.



New kitchen in the Little Bray Family Resource and Development Project, Bray

The Health and Wellbeing Partnership has provided a strong platform for the Local Development Officer to lead on the Healthy Community Hub project which is a priority for all and has enabled a more collaborative approach to be followed in important areas such as health impact assessment, food poverty and strategic inclusion of wellbeing within the Wicklow Local Economic & Community Plan.

HSE programmes in the Bray area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Bray Area Partnership

Social Prescribing

Bray Area Partnership

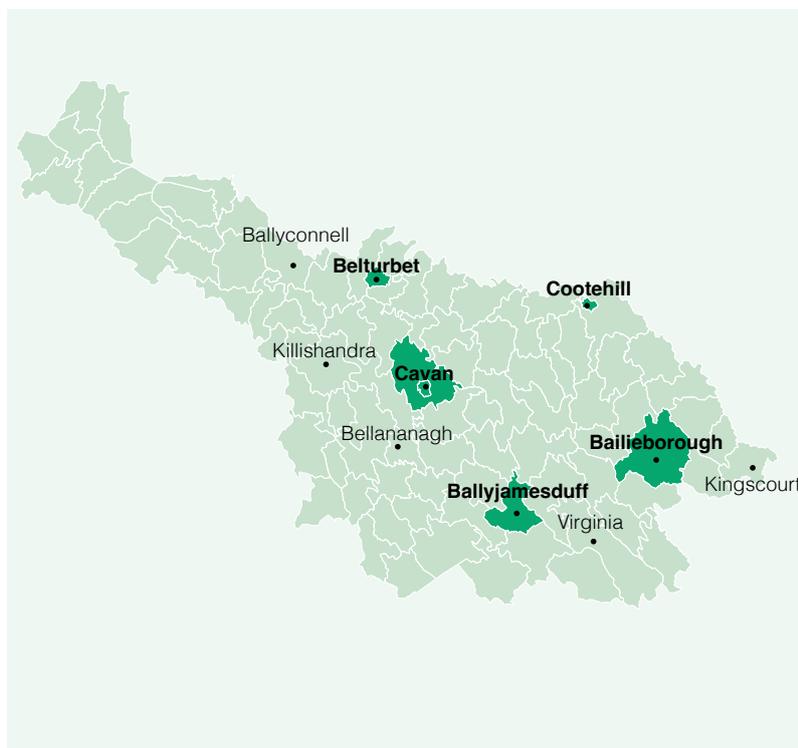
Parenting Programme

Bray Area Partnership

Healthy Food Made Easy

Southside Partnership & Co. and Wicklow Partnership

3.5 Cavan Town and County (Cavan)



Local Development Officer

Sinead Tormey

HSE Coordinator

Ann Marie Crosse

Electoral Districts

Belturbet Urban, Cavan Urban, Cavan Rural, Cootehill Urban, Bailieborough, Ballyjamesduff

Map of Cavan Town and County (Cavan) SHC Areas

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

Cavan's Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme focus in 2022 was centred on community engagement, identifying needs, collaboration, and delivery. The Enhancement Fund provided a real opportunity to address refurbishment and accessibility within recreation and amenity spaces across the designated areas of the programme, of which there were many, with works delivered in Cavan Town, Belturbet, Cootehill, Ballyjamesduff and Bailieborough.

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Seed Fund provided further opportunity to enhance existing infrastructure across a range of important services and facilities, enabling healthier outcomes for the different target groups being addressed. Examples of this include:

- Sensory play and amenity enhancements to the Tullachmongan Resource Centre's playground.
- A community hub space at Cavan Leisure Centre was utilised for health and wellbeing initiatives including physical activity classes for both young and old and an innovative portable interactive library service project for those with cognitive impairment.
- A library e-book and audio book initiative for Ukrainian adults and children was further evidence of the Cavan programme's ability to respond to emerging needs within the designated communities.

The Cavan programme will continue to progress its community hubs for integration in 2023 as well as tackling areas such as food poverty and local food production initiatives.



Cootehill Park, Cavan



Con Smith Park, Cavan

Le Chéile Community Hub

Case study



Le Chéile Community hub (a former bank building) was acquired in the centre of Cootehill by Cavan County Council in conjunction with the Cootehill local town team. The town team sought to provide a community hub for Cootehill to access important services and supports which would otherwise only be available in either Cavan or Monaghan town. Though the committee have little funding and source ongoing resources from different community grant schemes, they were successful in leveraging supports from the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Seed Fund to fit out a training kitchen facility which will enable the Healthy Food Made Easy programme to be delivered and other planned initiatives in response to food poverty.

The hub is already busy and heavily booked out as a community space for local groups and more recently the Ukrainian community are using the hub to have a safe, warm space to meet up. The hub was recognised for its community effort in the recent Pride of Place awards with Cootehill winning its population category based on the Le Chéile Community Hub project.

HSE programmes in the Cavan area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Cavan County Development Company (Breffni)

Social Prescribing

Teach Oscail FRC

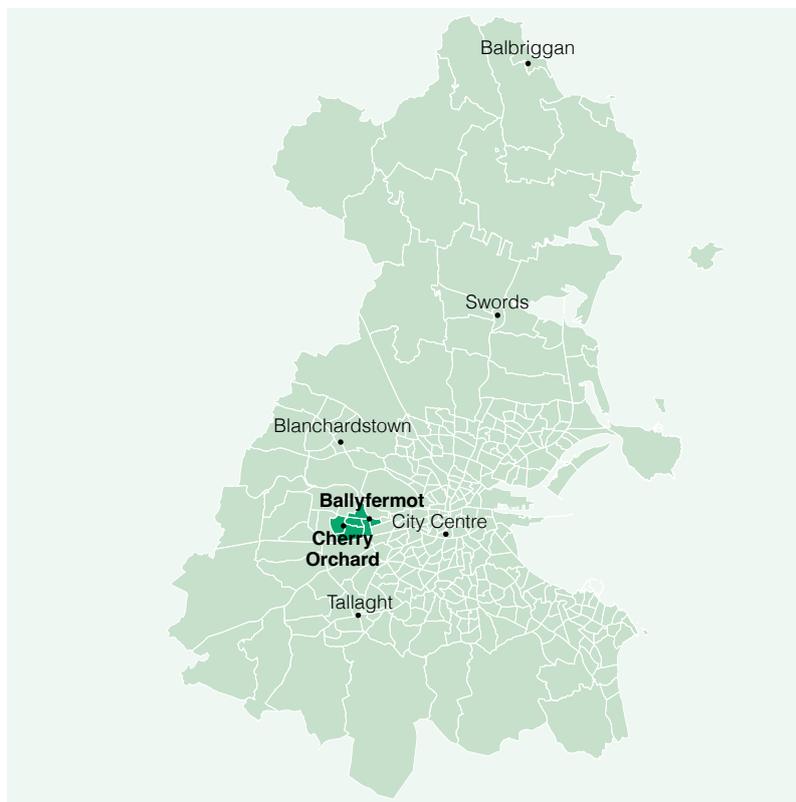
Parenting Programme

Cavan County Development Company (Breffni)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Cavan County Development Company (Breffni)

3.6 Cherry Orchard and Ballyfermot (Dublin)



Local Development Officer
Joanna Kelly

HSE Coordinator
Áine Buggy

Electoral Districts
Cherry Orchard A, Cherry Orchard B (Carna), Cherry Orchard C, Drumfinn, Decies, Kylemore

Map of Cherry Orchard and Ballyfermot (Dublin) SHC Areas
■ Sláintecare Healthy Communities
● Settlements
■ Electoral Divisions

The Cherry Orchard Programme sought to carry out a health profiling and mapping project similar to the three other Dublin Council sites to gain a greater understanding of health priorities at a local level. It is hoped that the project will inform service delivery and development initiatives under Dublin City Council’s Local Economic and Community Plan, and more importantly inform actions within the Cherry Orchard and Ballyfermot community. Enhancement Funding was prioritised for upgrading and improvement to the Peoples Park in Ballyfermot and Seed Funding was also well directed to address local need. Examples of this include supporting trauma therapy services with space to deliver family interventions, and supporting Ballyfermot Youth Service with innovative awareness raising goggles as an early intervention and prevention tool on the use of drugs and alcohol.



Peoples Park, Ballyfermot

People Park Ballyfermot Case Study



Ballyfermot People's Park was once a fenced off empty green space. Dublin City Council transformed the area into a beautiful park for everybody to enjoy – with grass and planted mounds, wild areas, play, meeting and performance spaces, a vegetable patch, bee sanctuary and market space. The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Enhancement Funding was able to assist significantly in the delivery of the park concept.

Following eight months of consultation to get the views of the local community, Dublin City Council completed the construction of People's Park with particular emphasis given to access design through engagement with members of the Ballyfermot Chapelizod Disability Accessibility Group. The park provides for all ages, but it is mostly interpreted as a quiet space to access nature rather than a designated playground, providing for the high proportion of older residents of the area.

The inclusion of outdoor gym equipment enhances the invitation for residents to meet and move together and improve the long-term health and wellbeing of the community. Similarly, with over 100 trees planted to create a mini woodland, mixed hedging and a sensory garden, People's Park in Ballyfermot has offered the local community a good opportunity for healthier living and a safe, social resource for all.

HSE programmes in the Cherry Orchard/ Ballyfermot area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership
(Parents Plus)

Social Prescribing

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership
(Parents Plus)

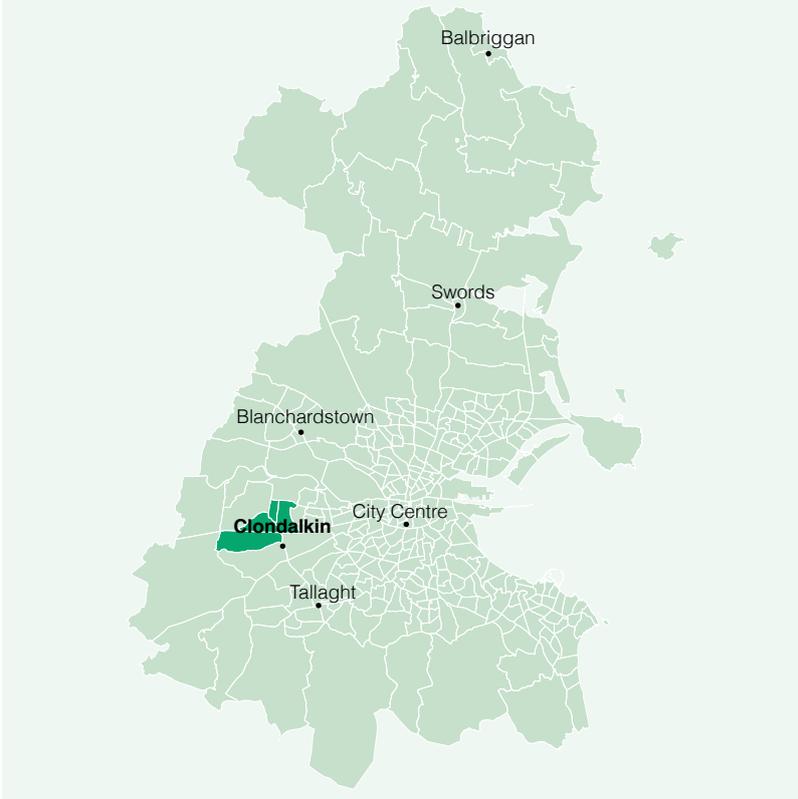
Parenting Programme

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership
(Parents Plus)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Ballyfermot Chapelizod Partnership

3.7 Clondalkin (Dublin)



Local Development Officer

David Morrissey

HSE Coordinator

Áine Buggy

Electoral Districts

Clondalkin-Cappaghaghmore, Clondalkin-Rowlagh, Clondalkin-Dunawley, Clondalkin-Moorfield

Map of Clondalkin (Dublin) SHC Areas

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

South Dublin County Council plays an integral role in promoting and supporting the health and wellbeing of its local communities. It does this through the different functions of its Directorate work programmes, harnessing and connecting its resources to those of the Sláintecare Healthy Community partners to deliver positive health outcomes for the Clondalkin community. Whilst the Clondalkin Local Development Officer only started the role at the year-end, South Dublin County Council sought to maximise use of Enhancement Funding, addressing some important issues within the Clondalkin area including the provision of physical activity infrastructure in Clondalkin Park. Seed Funding concepts being considered in 2023 for Clondalkin include food insecurity, addressing child poverty and creating safer communities.

The programme was launched in December 2022 at Rowlagh Community Centre and served as an opportunity to showcase all the services and supports available to promote health and wellbeing for the people of the area.



Callisthenic Gym Equipment, Clondalkin

HSE programmes in the Clondalkin area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

South Dublin County Partnership

Social Prescribing

South Dublin County Partnership

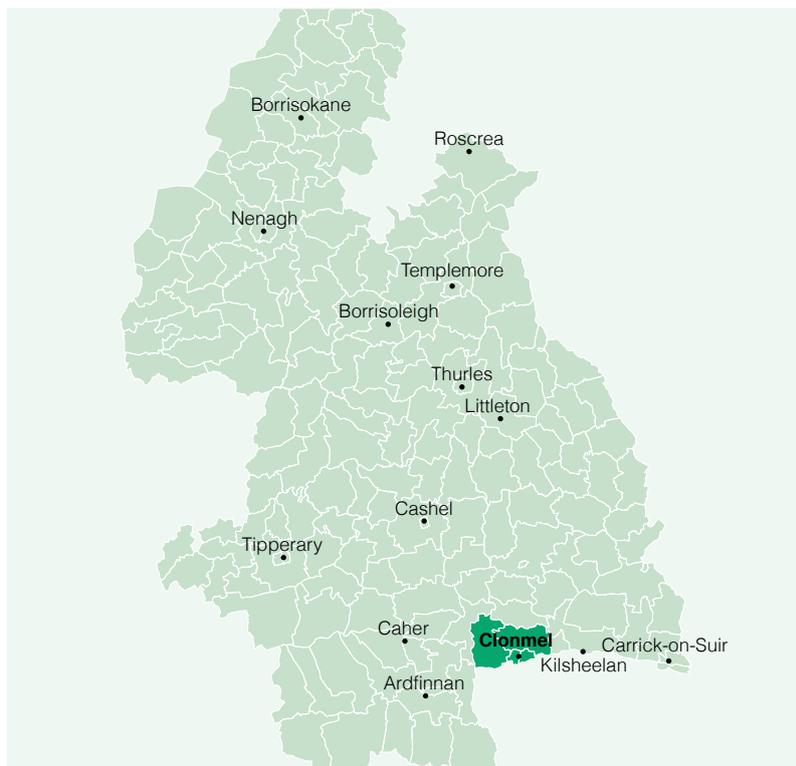
Parenting Programme

Deansrath Family Resource Centre (Parents Plus)

Healthy Food Made Easy

South Dublin County Partnership

3.8 Clonmel (Tipperary)



Local Development Officer

Stephanie O'Callaghan

HSE Coordinator

Paula Lowney

Electoral Districts

Clonmel West Urban, Clonmel East Urban, Clonmel Rural, Inishlounaght

Map of Clonmel (Tipperary) SHC Areas

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The Clonmel Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme is well integrated into the way of working of Tipperary County Council. The Local Development Officer is a key part of the overall community and rural team and they collectively have collaborated strongly in supporting the programme in the town. An example of this is the focus of the enhancement allocation which sought to regenerate Suir Island with 0.9 hectares of gardens and public landscaped areas being developed for the town. The fund contributed towards the Suir Island Garden works as part of the overall masterplan and, along with Active Travel and other key funding measures, Clonmel will have an amenity and recreational resource that will provide positive health benefits for the local community, whilst also allowing reconnection of Clonmel with the River Suir. The overall Suir Island plan will be a step forward in investment for future generations enabling improved wellbeing and conservation of the rich heritage and biodiversity of the island.

Other areas of focus for the Clonmel programme in 2022 included reclamation of a derelict site to provide a sensory garden area for residents within a residential area of the town and there was also a strong emphasis on supporting families and children. Examples of this include a consultation framework for children and young people developed to input into the Local Economic & Community Plan as well as the establishment of a social activity network for children and young people with disabilities. Areas of focus planned for 2023 will address issues such as energy insecurity, substance misuse, social integration and building on the strong work done with children and young people.



Photo of Suir Island, Clonmel

Home Energy Assessments Pilot

Case study



The Home Energy Assessments Pilot was developed in response to needs identified within the community as part of the mapping and initial community engagement undertaken by the Local Development Officer. The rising costs of living experienced in 2022 (particularly utility costs) resulted in many household incomes being under persistent strain to meet the running costs of the household. This was a challenging issue leading to insecurities around heat, food, and hygiene as well as increased anxiety for many households.

Steering away from retrofitting projects, the pilot considered how best to provide practical support and immediate benefit to households, through addressing energy efficiencies in the home and health inequalities through fairer greening. It was decided to evaluate the impact of home energy assessments to ascertain the nature of energy use and insecurity issues and how best these could be addressed. Five diverse households were identified through partnering with a secondary school in Clonmel and the Energy Communities Tipperary Co-operative. The Home School Liaison Officer worked with a selection of families willing to take part in the pilot evaluation and the Energy Communities Tipperary Cooperative tailored their community education programme to design a toolkit for the home assessments. The energy assessment process involved home visit engagement with the household members identifying ways where they could change their energy consumption behaviour and identifying the best times to use appliances more efficiently.

There was also a maximum grant of €500 allocated to each household. Energy efficiency recommendations were made by the Energy Communities Tipperary Cooperative through completion of a report for each household. Allocation of the grant was agreed with the households and these actions were delivered.

A follow up with the households will be completed in early 2023 reviewing the pilot and there will be consideration as to what other services, agencies and supports would/could further benefit these households. An information leaflet on reducing energy costs will also be prepared by the Energy Communities Tipperary Cooperative and shared with households through the school. It is envisaged that the pilot would also identify a number of other potential supports and opportunities to enable households to become more resilient in addressing issues and accessing the supports required to improve health outcomes.

HSE programmes in the Clonmel area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Clonmel Community Resource Centre

Social Prescribing

Clonmel Community Resource Centre

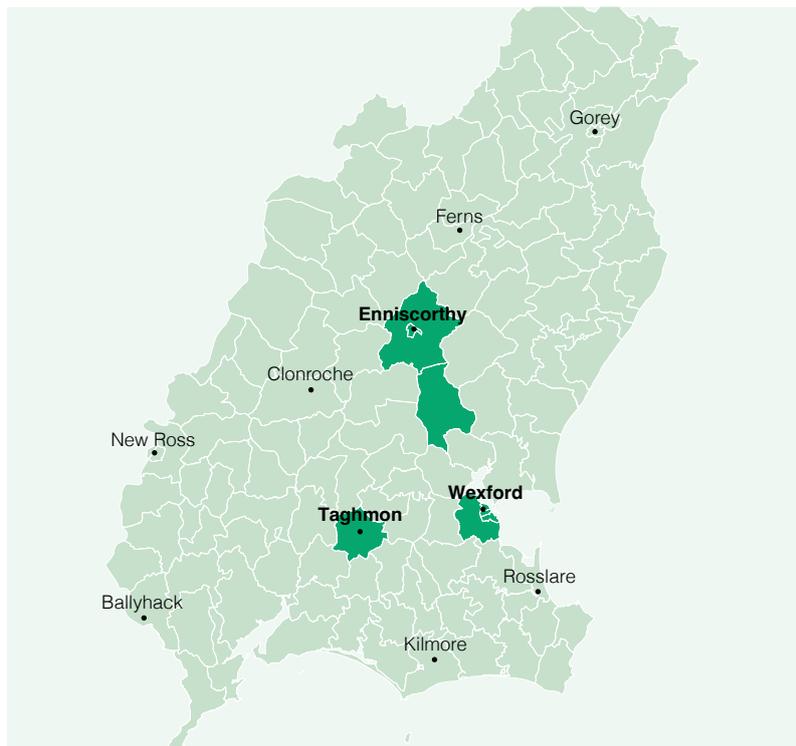
Parenting Programme

Barnardos (Triple P)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Clonmel Community Resource Centre

3.9 Enniscorthy and Wexford Town (Wexford)



Local Development Officer

Ann Marie Laffan

HSE Coordinator

Ema Maguire

Electoral Districts

Enniscorthy Urban, Enniscorthy Rural, Edermine, Taghmon, Wexford Rural, Wexford Urban No. 1, Wexford Urban No. 2, Wexford Urban No. 3

Map of Enniscorthy and Wexford Town (Wexford) SHC Areas

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

Wexford County Council, with four area sites in Enniscorthy Town areas, Wexford Town areas, Edermine and Taghmon, had a very busy year delivering aspects of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme.

The enhancement of recreation and amenity space was prioritised under the early funding measure from the Department of Health and the engagement of the Local Development Officer, who had previous experience in the community section of the Local Authority in Wexford, provided a strong platform to engage and deliver on the ground in communities. This offered a great opportunity for the targeted communities and relevant stakeholders to plan and design initiatives for consideration under the Seed Funding measure that would make a difference to local health outcomes. Examples of this included:

- the cycle park in Enniscorthy allowing young people and those returning to cycling the opportunity to learn and practice in a safe and supported way.
- the development of a sensory and wellbeing space in the community allotments area in the town for all users including those accessing mental health support services.
- there was a strong emphasis in seeing how best to tackle energy insecurity and a pilot retrofitting and fuel poverty project will progress in 2023 in Wexford town which offers good learning given the breadth of partners involved to deliver the project.

There was also strong collaboration across similar local government programmes that had shared outcomes within their remit and Healthy Wexford and Age Friendly Wexford partnered with the Local Development Officer to develop responsive projects regarding community-centred digital care amongst others and this cohesion is to be furthered in 2023 to ensure alignment of wellbeing activity with the Wexford Local Economic & Community Plan. Issues that are being highlighted for the Healthy Communities area include green therapy and climate action responses and providing coherence to Wexford County Council supports to communities including assistance towards making application processes for funding and supports much easier for communities.

Enniscorthy Community College After School Programme

Case study

The Home School Liaison Officer and the Principal of Enniscorthy Community College identified a need within the school community for additional support for students identified at risk of leaving school prematurely. Current structures/programmes within the school did not accommodate this and the Seed Funded programme that was developed aims to fill this gap and provide students with additional skills and training in subjects/areas they have expressed interest in.



Students of Enniscorthy Community College at the Sláintecare Healthy Communities launch in Wexford

The students themselves were consulted on this and, based on feedback, after-school programmes were devised and put in place, including horticulture and boxfit classes and the establishment of a cookery club and a hair & beauty club. To join in any of these activities, students had to attend school on the days the activities were taking place, acting as an incentive to attend school. The project also involved the process of relationship building with local support organisations facilitating positive engagement between the students and the supports agencies in an informal and fun way that will help build positive relationships.



A longer-term benefit of this project will be that these students will remain in school and continue their education whilst also taking up new activities and gaining new skills. This in turn will improve their employment outcomes and improve their mental health. There are also plans to link the students in with another Seed Funded project, Enniscorthy Community Allotment Wellbeing & Sensory Garden as well as extend this project in 2023 to provide training for parents of students.

HSE programmes in the Wexford area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Ferns Diocesan Youth Service (FDYS)

Social Prescribing

Wexford Local Development

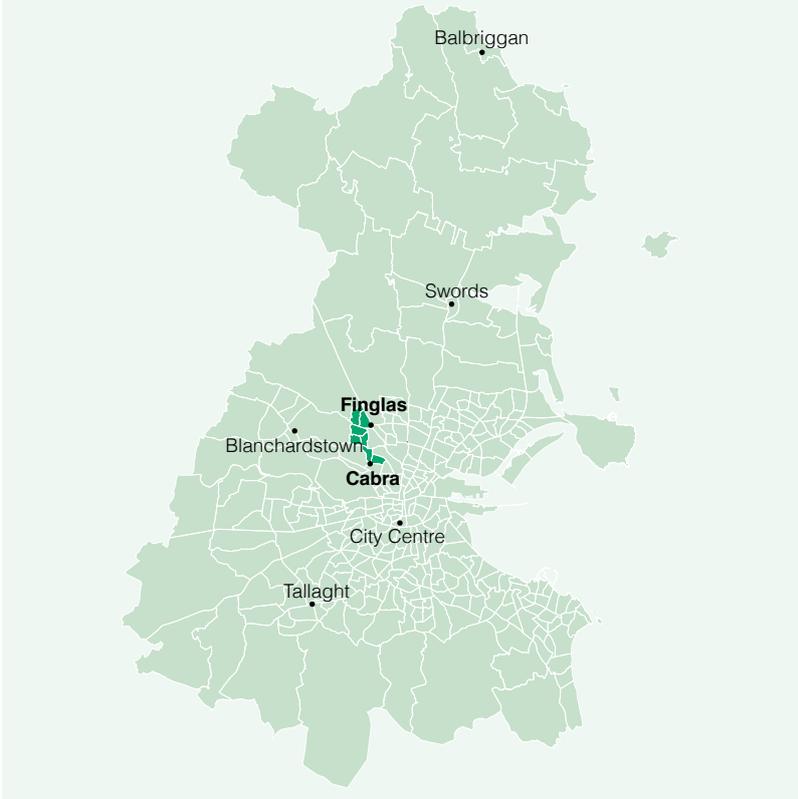
Parenting Programme

Barnardos (Triple P)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Ferns Diocesan Youth Service (FDYS)

3.10 Finglas and Cabra (Dublin)



Local Development Officer

Talent Nyamakope

HSE Coordinator

Lorraine McGowan

Electoral Districts

Finglas North A, Finglas North B, Finglas South A, Finglas South C, Finglas South D, Cabra West A, Cabra West B

Map of Finglas and Cabra (Dublin) SHC Areas

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

Dublin City Council’s integrated approach to the delivery of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme was clear in 2022 with the 4 Local Development Officers working collectively on a city-wide basis on some innovative projects. An example of this is the area-based profiling and health needs assessment to be undertaken by Dublin City Council to help understand health priorities and inform targeted local actions. The Finglas/Cabra programme responded to community need through their use of Enhancement Funding to provide and enhance physical activity infrastructure within Ventry Park in Cabra. Further enhancements on physical activity infrastructure will be carried out in Mount Bernard Park Cabra and Johnstown Park Finglas throughout 2023.

Some early engagements within the Finglas and Cabra communities by the Local Development Officer revealed low health literacy levels and in response a series of mobile health checks are to be carried out by the Irish Heart Foundation. A further progression on this is to produce health literacy enhancing initiatives where individuals can be referred as part of social prescribing services and is a focus for Seed Fund consideration across Finglas/Cabra and the three other areas for 2023. There was also work to increase the capacity of the social prescribing services in Finglas/Cabra through Northwest Partnership in 2022.

Barry Neighbourhood Project (Finglas)

Case study



The Barry neighbourhood area in Finglas West has well-documented community safety challenges with issues such as drug dealing and anti-social behaviour. The Finglas West Family Resource Centre and a football pitch in close proximity are key resources for the Barry area with the football pitch underutilised due to the antisocial activities around the area, particularly after dark.

The Resource Centre is open to the community until 10pm from Monday to Thursday and many local families access services there. Since its inception in 2018, the centre has engaged with 2,400 children, parents and carers with services including: a parent & toddler group; Community wellbeing projects; Mindfulness for children; Homework stay and play group; Parenting programmes; Sensory play groups; Intergenerational gardening projects and much more.

Despite the public lighting in the area meeting regular standards, antisocial behaviour is rampant once it gets dark in the walkway connecting Barry Avenue and Plunket Grove where lighting standards are poor. In response to the issue, the Local Development Officer sought to enable the provision of additional public lighting to increase safe connectivity to these community resources when required.

Installation of adequate lighting through Seed Funding was delivered and for small investment there has been a good return in benefit to the local community. The lighting measure and listening to the community has ensured the safety of families attending the Finglas Family Resource Centre and has also encouraged far greater local participation on the football pitch throughout the year increasing overall physical activity levels within the Barry area.

HSE programmes in the Finglas/Cabra area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Dublin North-West Partnership

Social Prescribing

Dublin North-West Partnership

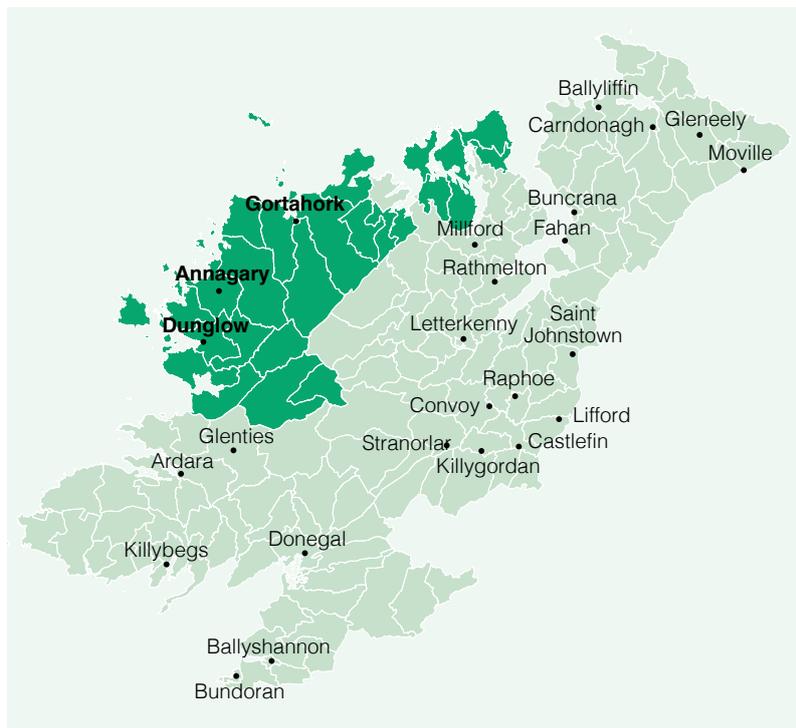
Parenting Programme

Better Finglas (Barnardos) (Triple P)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Dublin North-West Partnership

3.11 Gaeltacht (Donegal)



Local Development Officer

Pamela Smullen

HSE Coordinator

Ann Marie Crosse

Electoral Districts

Meenaclady, Gortahork, Dunlewy, Cross Roads, Creeslough, Doocharry, Crovehy, Lettermacaward, Glenleheen, Fintown, Carrickart, Greenfort, Aran, Rutland, Fanad West, Maghery, Dunglow, Annagary, Magheraclogher, Creenasmear, Dunfanaghy, Doe Castle, Rosguill, Cranford, Fanad North

Map of Gaeltacht (Donegal) SHC Areas

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities sites in Donegal County Council are the Northwest Gaeltacht area and Inishowen. They took an integrated approach to the delivery of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme with the two Local Development Officers working collectively where relevant and individually responding to community need within their designated areas.

The Local Development Officers worked collaboratively creating a focused expression of interest process to inform the Seed Fund allocations. The Sláintecare Healthy Communities sites in the Northwest Gaeltacht area offered Donegal County Council a good opportunity to pilot initiatives that focused on the wider determinants of health. The initiatives identified for delivery through Enhancement Funding centred on enhancing or creating enabling environments and infrastructure for physical activity and included walkway/greenway projects and amenity enhancements.



Minister Feighan at the SHC launch in Donegal Gaeltacht

The Gaeltacht site prioritised initiatives that tackled rural isolation and pilot mental health programmes in conjunction with community partners. Woodlands for wellbeing was one such pilot – bringing together a mix of interventions that addressed social connectivity, peer support and green therapy whilst maximising the natural assets of the Gaeltacht peninsula. In fact, the expression of interest process proved very effective in creating a better community understanding of the Local Authority role in the Sláintecare Healthy Community Programme. The whole county focus on food insecurity and local food production responses are further examples of the health determinants focused expression of interest process used by Donegal County Council.

Donegal Food Response Network

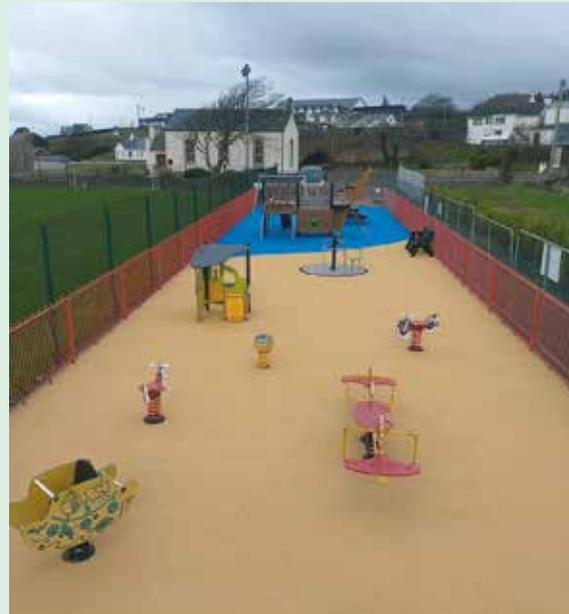
Case study



An expression of interest for Seed Funding from the Donegal Local Development Company to create a partnership between the Donegal Food Response Network and the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme along with the Healthy Donegal Programme. The aim was to create greater awareness around food insecurity, provide information and awareness on the supports available and the community and voluntary organisations that provide same, and ensure that those most in need are better able to avail of such services.

The project required development of a website for Donegal Food Response Network to promote and publicise its work within the Donegal communities and ensure that people who need to avail of the services knew who to contact discreetly and confidentially, as well as raising awareness on the whole issue of food insecurity and local responses.

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme and Healthy Donegal programme are working in partnership to deliver this project on a county-wide basis. Both programmes hold a shared responsibility in addressing the social determinants of health and wellbeing and addressing risk factors associated with poverty. This partnership approach has established a strong connection, a shared understanding and scope to build upon the work already achieved by the Donegal Food Response Network. The project not only raises the issue of food insecurity faced by many people and access issues in relation to healthy, fresh foods but it also provides a platform for the Donegal Food Response Network and other partners to work further on food insecurity issues with various funders and partners. The website <https://donegalfoodresponse.ie> was launched in December 2022.



Dungloe Foreshore Playground
(Enhancement Funding project)

HSE programmes in the Donegal Gaeltacht area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC)

Social Prescribing

Ionad Naomh Padraig, CDP na Rosann, Milford and District Resource Centre, Dunfanaghy Family Resource Centre (one post split across four workers and hosted by four organisations)

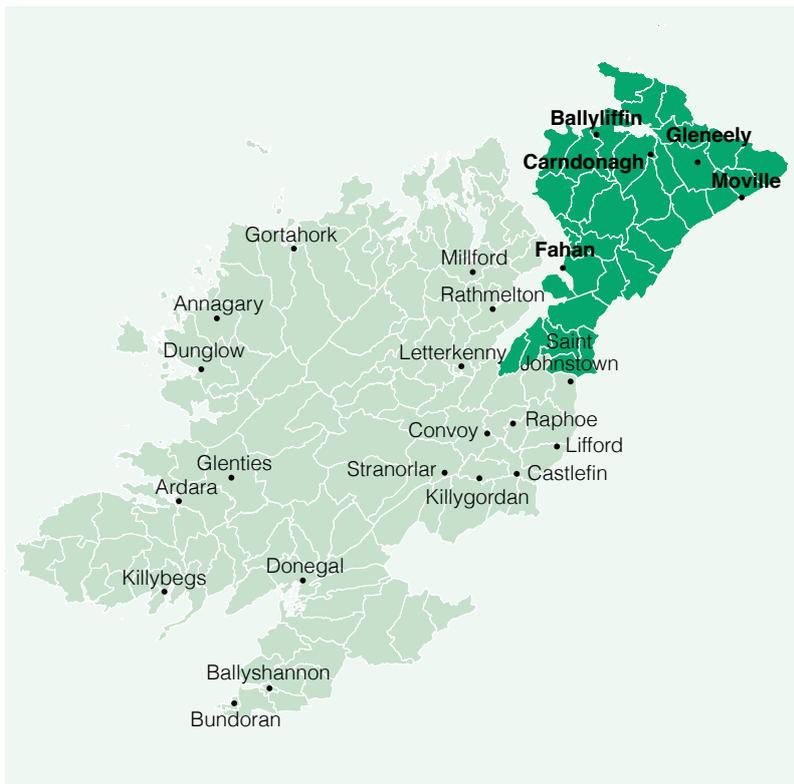
Parenting Programme

Finn Valley Family Resource Centre

Healthy Food Made Easy

Donegal Local Development Company (DLDC)

3.12 Inishowen (Donegal)



Local Development Officer

Clodagh Murray

HSE Coordinator

Ann Marie Crosse

Electoral Districts

Straid, Ballyliffin, Glentogher, Gleneely, Carthage, Ardmalin, Malin, Culdaff, Turmone, Greencastle, Movicille, Castlecary, Redcastle, Glennagannon, Carndonagh, Whitecastle, Three Trees, Illies, Mintiaghs, Dunaff, Desertegny, Buncrana Rural, Buncrana Urban, Fahan, Birdstown, Kilderry, Inch Island, Burt, Killea, Castleforward, Newtown, Cunningham, Manorcunningham

Map of Inishowen SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The Donegal Inishowen site is reflective of peripheral rural Ireland with higher than national average older person age profiles and higher proportions of one person households than recorded nationally. This, coupled with poor digital infrastructure, has informed some of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities focus for 2022.

The Inishowen Seed Funding allocations addressed issues such as on food insecurity, rural isolation, and mental health. Many of the initiatives supported, brought together interventions that collectively addressed the determinants of health within rural communities. The leveraging of supports from key community projects to deliver Seed Funding actions has enabled the delivery of pilot programmes across the Inishowen peninsula that have enabled Sláintecare Healthy Communities to be well embedded within North Donegal.



Storyboard from SHC Launch in Inishowen



Culduff Development Association Polytunnel (Seed Funding Project)

Golden Lunches

Case study



The Exchange Inishowen in partnership with local community organisations developed the “Golden Lunches” initiative – its origins lay in afternoon tea events where the social and mental impacts of lockdown and COVID-19 were strongly highlighted by the local community.

As a result, a small group of volunteers from the Exchange decided to launch a pilot of “Golden Lunches” providing wholesome, nutritious lunches for older people along with the opportunity to meet new friends and socialise and proved hugely popular. With the support of Alone, the weekly lunch was publicised widely and attracted up to 25 people each week.

The Exchange needed to register with the HSE Environmental Services and was required to make significant improvements to the facilities and equipment to meet the highest possible standards of food hygiene. A successful allocation from the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Seed Fund enabled these improvements and the initiative now has a strong volunteer base and strong partnerships have been built with agencies and organisations to address local need including community gardai home security workshops. The on-going partnership with Alone, Insight Inishowen, the Social Prescribing programme and Inishowen Food Bank means it is possible to identify and provide practical help or immediate referrals for anyone with specific social, mental health or practical needs.

HSE programmes in the Donegal Inishowen area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP)

Social Prescribing

Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP)

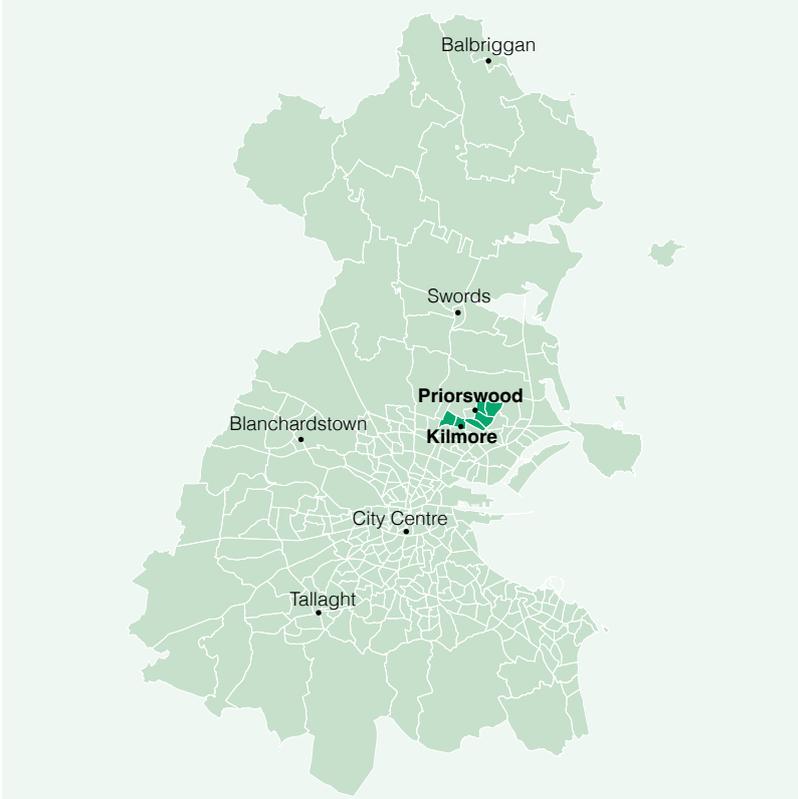
Parenting Programme

Finn Valley Family Resource Centre

Healthy Food Made Easy

Inishowen Development Partnership (IDP)

3.13 Kilmore and Priorswood (Dublin)



Local Development Officer

Fiona McDonnell

HSE Coordinator

Lorraine McGowan

Electoral Districts

Kilmore A, Kilmore B, Kilmore C, Priorswood B, Priorswood C, Priorswood D

Map of Kilmore and Priorswood SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The Kilmore and Priorswood Local Development Officer provided strong supports to the local community in 2022 offering partnership opportunity to local organisations to bring about better health outcomes. The Enhancement Fund allocation to the Kilmore & Priorswood programme helped deliver a playground for the Darndale community as well as refurbishment works to the Kilmore West Community Centre. The Seed Fund opportunity built upon this with sports equipment provided to community centres and was also used to help reinforce community interventions within the targeted areas. These projects included Change for Life, expanding the remit of Healthy Food Made Easy and an evaluation of the Empowering Communities programme. Some focus under consideration for 2023 includes Health Literacy and resourcing the findings from engagements and asset mapping exercises.

Local Community Asset Mapping

Case study



Dublin City Council commissioned a review of the Darndale, Belcamp and Moatview areas of North Dublin in 2019-2020 which led to the development of a Socio-Economic and Community Plan. The plan set out multiple actions to tackle the priority areas of crime, gang culture, drugs, education, training/employment opportunities, health and wellbeing, services for families and young people and physical improvements to the area. The plan offered a comprehensive overview of the area's assets, services, and supports.

However, when the Darndale/Kilmore Local Development Officer within the Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme engaged with the community and local agencies and groups of the area, a key finding was the need for the local community to be more aware of all the resources, services, and assets that they could potentially engage with. There was a gap between the information within the Socio-Economic Plan and how this information reached the community. In response to this, Seed Funding was garnered to develop a local community asset map. The community asset map would map the social, public and health services, sport and fitness centres and any other initiative that impacts and promotes health and wellbeing within the community.

Working with the Dublin Housing Observatory and SMART Dublin, the project will develop a localised community asset map, created, and designed in an easy to use and understandable format and digitally available across platforms and accompanied by supports to bridge the 'digital divide'.

The asset mapping project addresses health inequality as it enables the community to be more aware of services and initiatives that are available within their local area that can impact on health outcomes. It creates engagement and participation in services and potential for events that improve overall health and wellbeing for Darndale/Kilmore. The asset map will highlight the collective resources which can be leveraged to develop effective solutions to promote social inclusion and improve the health and wellbeing of the area and content will be shared via Darndale together and Dublin City Council social media platforms.

HSE programmes in the Kilmore/Priorswood area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

North-Side Partnership (Triple P)

Social Prescribing

North-Side Partnership (Triple P)

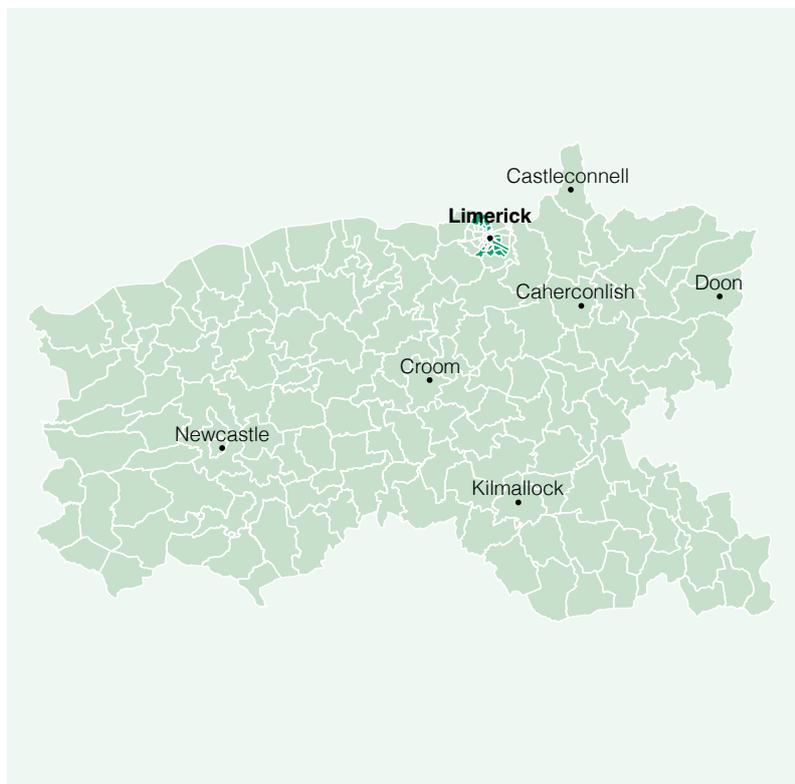
Parenting Programme

North-Side Partnership (Triple P)

Healthy Food Made Easy

North-Side Partnership (Triple P)

3.14 Limerick City (Limerick)



Local Development Officer

Tanya Carey

HSE Coordinator

Ger Fahy

Electoral Districts

Ballynanty, Kileely A, Kileely B, John's A, John's B, Abbey C, Abbey D, Singland A, St. Laurence, Galvone A, Gavone B, Rathbane, Glentworth A, Glentworth B, Glentworth C, Prospect A, Prospect B, Ballinacurra B

Map of Limerick City SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The Limerick City & County Council approach to the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme reflected a strong appreciation for real community involvement and building upon existing work within the targeted communities. The Enhancement Fund project choices highlight such an approach, with the Garryowen and Ballynanty investments part of wider strategic projects under the European URBACT Health and Greenspace Project which sought to support and enhance the provision of quality green infrastructure in urban areas for their health benefits. The focus on natural recreational opportunities for all age groups and the repurposing and animation of areas that were passive or unused gained strong support from the local communities. The fund contributed to the creation of active corridor access to local services, transport opportunities and provided much needed recreation and amenity infrastructure for the neighbourhoods.

There was a strong focus in 2022 on food insecurity and local food production initiatives with the Local Development Officer and the Healthy Limerick Coordinator collectively developing concepts with local partners to address the issue. Examples of this include the city-wide community garden Seed Fund concept within under-utilised spaces across the City. Similarly, consideration in the Seed Fund spend was given to such spaces for their repurposing to natural play areas for the benefit of the communities.

The 2022 launch of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme in the Southill Hub showcased a strong local collaboration between the local community, the community partners, HSE and the Local Authority. A Seed Fund prioritisation for meaningful wellbeing engagement with the local communities and partners to input into the Local Economic & Community Plan is further evidence of cohesion and focus on community.

Johnsgate Renewal

Case study



Johnsgate is an inner-city community, with almost 50 homes. Initially most properties were privately-owned, and the area was once considered affluent, however, in recent years, there has been a change in the dynamic of the estate with more private rentals and social housing in place. The project was one of three completed under the European URBACT Health and Greenspace Project and involved a team from Limerick Council supporting the community and working with the residents committee to tackle issues arising in the area, for example littering, drug use and anti-social behaviour.

The broader aim of the renewal project was to support and enhance the provision of quality green infrastructure for health benefit and included enhancement to green space adjacent to the old Limerick City Wall and sensitive enhancements to the public realm near the historical landmark.

Limerick City and County Council worked in partnership with the community regarding the enhancements with a determinants of health lens addressing the physical and built environment and safety and security aspects of the area. The Enhancement Funded project has provided a more attractive healthier environment for the local residents to utilise as an amenity recreation space and has promoted health and wellbeing behaviours whilst also addressing the anti-social behaviour and littering issues. Residents have consequently experienced greater pride in their community as a result.



Johnsgate Renewal (before)



Johnsgate Renewal (After)

HSE programmes in the Limerick area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Paul Partnership

Social Prescribing

Paul Partnership

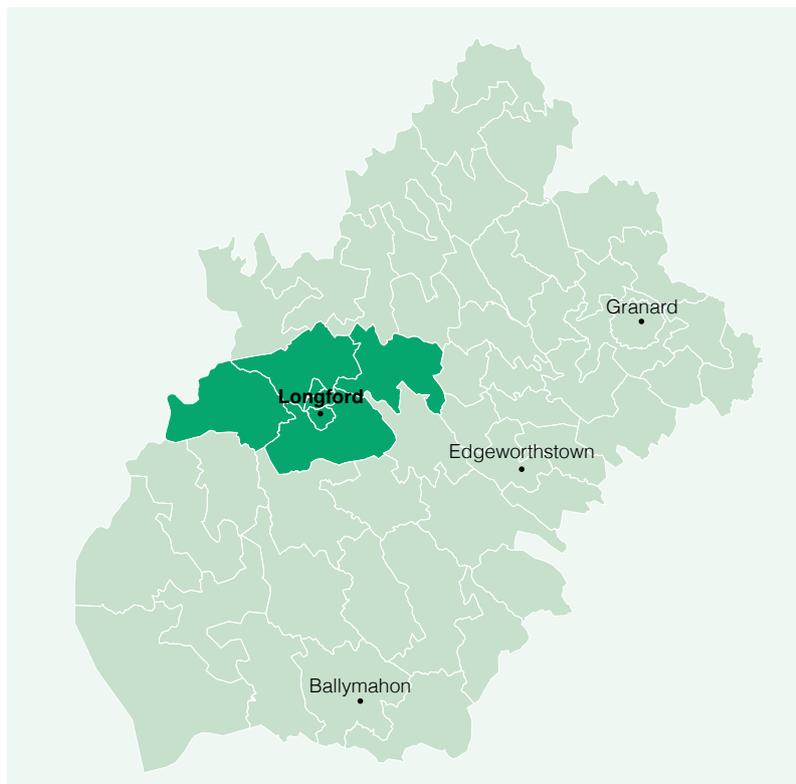
Parenting Programme

Limerick Social service Council (Parents Plus)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Paul Partnership

3.15 Longford Town (Longford)



Local Development Officer

Patricia Forde

HSE Coordinator

Anthony O'Prey

Electoral Districts

Longford Rural, Longford No. 1 Urban, Longford No. 2 Urban, Caldragh, Cloondara, Cloonee

Map of Longford Town SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

Reducing health inequalities and enhancing access to health services and necessary supports were two key areas of focus for the Longford Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme. The Local Development Officer sought at the outset to align activity with that of the Community Safety Partnership pilot for the town given the similar shared objectives of both programmes. This resulted in tangible benefit for the local community.

Use of the Enhancement Fund to enable universal community access to the medical centre and HSE facility at Ballyminion was a progressive start for the programme. The project not only enabled access to the health-related services for the nearby estates, but also facilitated connectivity with the town centre. There was also an amenity enhancement context to the project with biodiversity/climate action initiatives with the location, affording opportunity for the programme to explore food insecurity projects in 2023.

Food production was a strong theme for Longford in 2022 with Seed Funding allocated towards a community garden project that sought to address food poverty, gardening for mental health, environmental care or just gardening for social networking. The project compliments some of the work of the existing Healthy Food Made Easy programme regarding addressing food poverty and there is also a relationship built with the local ETB who are willing to deliver sessions to community groups to enable and empower them to run and manage their own community garden.

An innovative inclusion awareness project was also designed to create greater awareness of the diverse populations within the Longford Healthy Communities area and how best to celebrate such diversity and provide education pieces for the greater community towards inclusion of the African, Muslim, Roma and Traveller populations within Longford Town.

Longford Community Houses

Case study



Longford County Council developed the Community House concept to provide identified supports for the local community within a safe space and promoting inclusion for everyone living within the community. The central idea is to liaise closely with local people in identifying needs and developing needs-led responses whilst also building capacity and leadership of the local community.

The community houses are based in the large estates of Ardnacassa & McEoin Park where health inequalities such as generational unemployment, substance misuse and domestic violence are prevalent. The community house concept creates opportunities for agencies to engage those who are most in need within a safe, warm comfortable space. The “outreach service delivery hubs”, on the doorstep of their own communities, offer greater opportunity and flexibility to avail of services. Some existing services being delivered are:

- information and advice on supports.
- education courses and training opportunities.
- counselling and support to individuals and groups.

Homework clubs within the Houses have proved extremely popular. These are aimed at children who may struggle with school attendance or routine after school, in safe spaces with qualified teachers available for extra support. The project is delivered in two of the Community Houses with the Home School Liaison Officer identifying children that would benefit from the targeted approach. Greater detail on the Community House concept and on the Longford Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme can be accessed by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehKvyrwjEh4>

HSE programmes in the Longford area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Employment Development and Information Centre (EDI)

Social Prescribing

Longford Community Resources

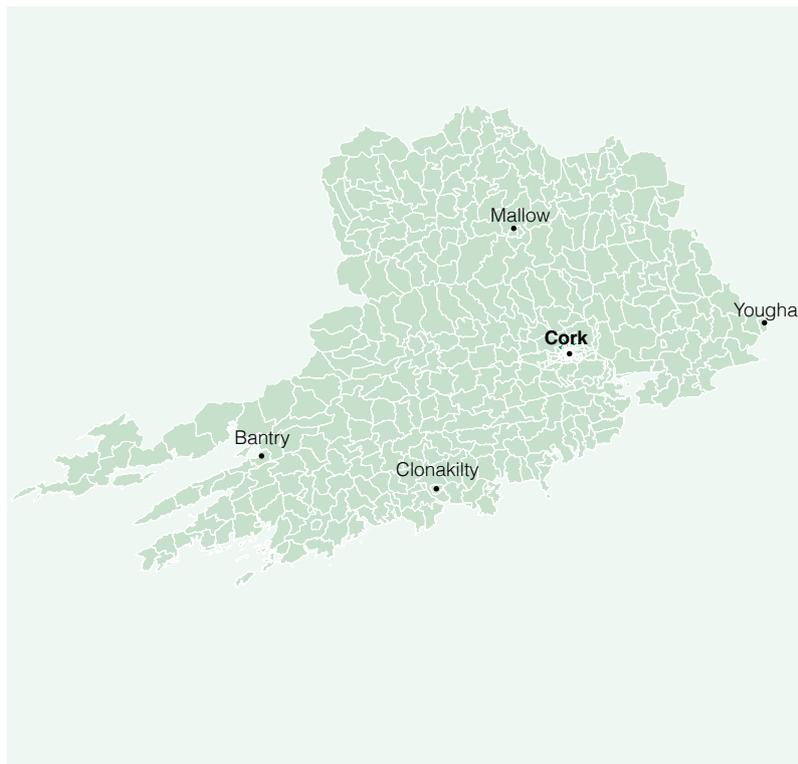
Parenting Programme

Lus na Greine Family Resource Centre (Triple P)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Employment Development and Information Centre (EDI)

3.16 North Cork City (Cork)



Local Development Officer

Tanya O'Sullivan

HSE Coordinator

Edel O'Donnell

Electoral Districts

Knocknaheeny, Fair Hill A, Fair Hill B, Fair Hill C, Churchfield, Gurranebraher A, Gurranebraher B, Gurranebraher C, Gurranebraher D, Gurranebraher E, Farranferris B, Farranferris C, The Glen A, Mayfield, Blackpool A

Map of North Cork City SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The advent of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme was a neat fit for Cork City Council as it had a strong correlation to the wellbeing approaches undertaken in Cork City for many years. The use of the Enhancement Fund was evidence of this with many of the projects identified addressing the wider determinants of health for key target groups and leveraging supports from partner agencies and organisations. Examples of this included:

- the provision of enhanced healthy spaces in Knocknaheeny, Mayfield and the Glen.
- upgrading of facilities at Parochial Hall.
- an innovative community garden project in St Anthony's Park Halting Site.

The arrival of the Local Development Officer gave great impetus to the programme with their Seed Fund being smartly utilised to address issues of concern such as a fuel and food pilot project developed to support energy savings and additional layered supports to some of the Enhancement projects adding further value to projects for the community.

The wider health equity lens taken by the Local Development Officer in the use of Seed Funding is shown in the creative community engagement approaches being proposed, ensuring meaningful engagement with residents of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme areas for input into Cork's Local Economic & Community Plan. Equally an approach to integrate the health and climate action response agendas within the communities is being cleverly progressed through the installation and growing of tree nurseries for community amenity use in the areas. A focus for the programme in 2023 is to continue the layering of supports and work with targeted communities to deliver improved health outcomes.



Awning in the Glen, North Cork City

Health Impact Assessment Seminar

Case study



One of the long-term objectives of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme is to increase awareness across local authorities of the need to operate with a health lens across their Directorate functions in tackling the wider determinants of health. Cork City Council engaged University College Cork to explore the undertaking of Health Impact Assessments on their City Development Plan 2022 – 2028 and Climate Action Plan.

As a further iteration of this, the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme sought to develop a Health Impact Assessment seminar for local stakeholders and looked at developing an agenda that could prove useful to relevant Cork City Council staff to inform the nature and potential of the assessment exercises. Case studies and needs requirements from technical staff, such as planners, were all developed as part of the learning seminar agenda and examples of a Health Impact Assessment and how it works in a practical way were included addressing different health determinant areas.

A UK consultant delivered the key input and offered case examples that provided valuable learning for those in attendance including learning for HSE staff to hear about planning and development and social impact which was not in their normal work stream consideration. The seminar has resulted in greater opportunities for the Community and Planning sections within Cork City Council to work together for better health outcomes for the city and to work on a project in the future using the Health Impact Assessment framework as a basis for wellbeing development. The Cork Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme has committed to undertaking a Health Impact Assessment of its Communities in 2023.

HSE programmes in the Cork City area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

Lotamore Family Resource Centre

Social Prescribing

Niche

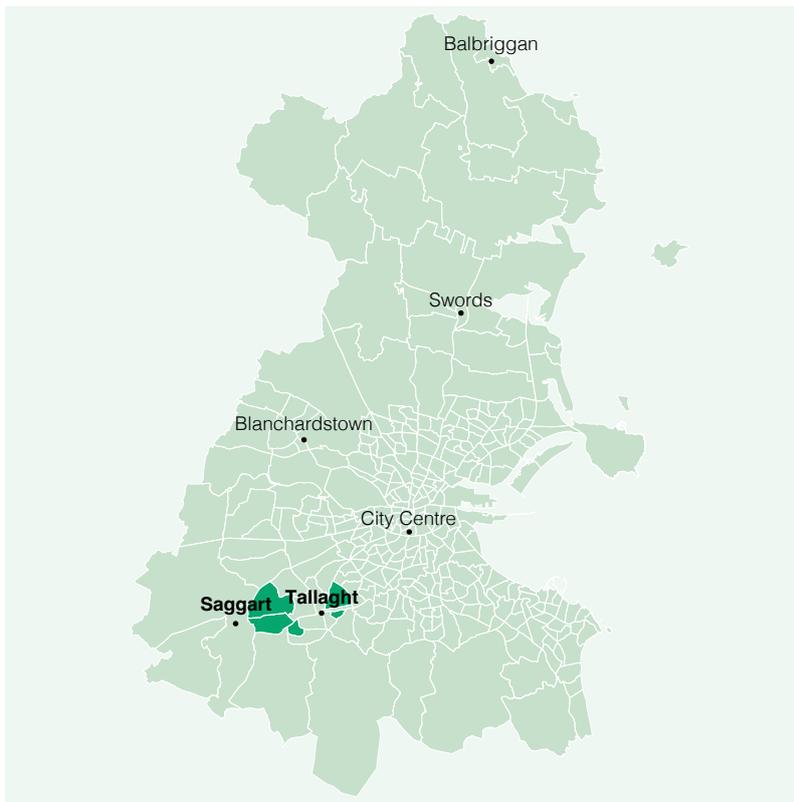
Parenting Programme

Let's Grow Together (Parents Plus)

Healthy Food Made Easy

Cork Sports Partnership

3.17 Tallaght (Dublin)



Local Development Officer

Grainne Meehan

HSE Coordinator

Áine Buggy

Electoral Districts

Tallaght-Fettercairn, Tallaght-Killinarden, Tallaght-Tymon, Tallaght-Avonbeg, Tallaght-Jobstown

Map of Tallaght SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The Tallaght programme had a strong health inequality focus in 2022. Use of the Enhancement Fund was prioritised for amenity and public realm improvements within Tallaght to help address the physical environment as a determinant of health response by South Dublin County Council. The Local Development Officer commenced in June 2022 and began working with communities to good effect in establishing local need and listening to the community. A proposal to address energy poverty and health inequalities linked to energy vulnerability was resourced from Seed Funding and will be a project that will provide much learning with a communication campaign, consumer advice, household energy efficiency and refurbishment, and stakeholder engagement all part of the proposal.

Whilst Tallaght has had some studies and profiles in the recent past, a further Seed Fund project will see a research consultancy asked to take a creative approach towards facilitating and developing an in-depth profile and strategy towards targeting the determinants of health within the Tallaght area, to develop an evidence base that illuminates key health inequalities and facilitates creative methods to capture the impact of lived experience of the determinants of health within the area. This project should then be able to map where potential lies for innovative wrap around supports / projects to be developed in 2023.



Trim Trail, MacUilliam Estate, Tallaght

Local Implementation Group – Tallaght & Clondalkin

Case study



To support the successful development and implementation of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, a Local Implementation Group needed to be established. The role of the Local Implementation Group was to guide and support the delivery of the programme at a local level through engaging with local knowledge, expertise, and resources to develop a strategic overview of the impacts on health inequalities at local level and to take a collaborative approach towards developing responses. The purpose of the Local Implementation Group can be summarised as follows:



The development of the Local Implementation Group is overseen by a steering group comprised of the HSE, South Dublin County Council and delivery partner representatives. The purpose, scope, and terms of reference of the Local Implementation Group was reviewed and agreed upon by the steering group. The membership will be made up of local representatives and stakeholders that can support community engagement and the prioritisation of health and wellbeing at a local and individual level.

The work of the Local Implementation Group is supported by working with a researcher to develop an in-depth overview of health inequalities within the Sláintecare areas. The objective of this research under Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme is to work with local stakeholders to take a strategic approach towards mapping and identifying where opportunities lie for innovative responses and solutions to health inequalities. It is envisaged that as the programme work progresses in 2023 that the Local Implementation Group will analyse community need, addressing gaps in service provision as well as providing a supportive structure where the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalised members of the community can be identified and strategies to address these needs developed.

HSE programmes in the Tallaght area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

South Dublin County Partnership

Social Prescribing

South Dublin County Partnership

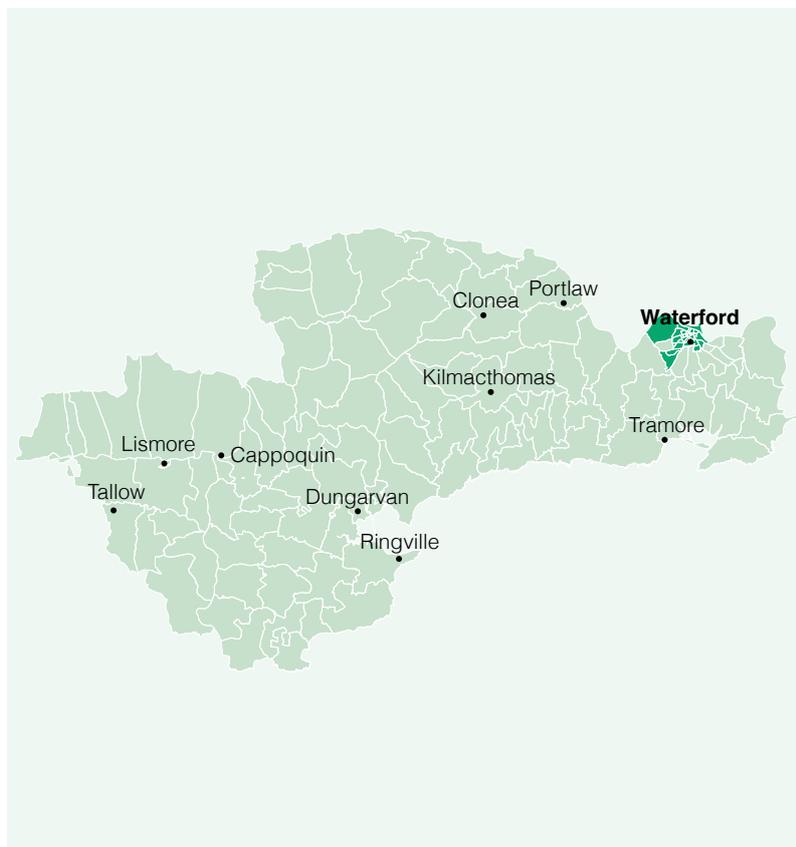
Parenting Programme

Barnardos (Triple P)

Healthy Food Made Easy

South Dublin County Partnership

3.18 Waterford City (Waterford)



Local Development Officer

Ovidiu Matiut

HSE Coordinator

Paula Lowney

Electoral Districts

Ballybed North, Ballybeg South, Ticor North, Ticor South, Larchville, Lisduggan, Kingsmeadow, Roanmore, Slievekeale, Morrison's Avenue West, Morrison's Avenue East, Military Road, Morrison's Road, Newport's Square, Shortcourse, Centre A, Centre B, Grange North, Ferrybank, Gracedieu, Cleaboy, Bilberry, The Glen, Ballybricken, Custom House A, Custom House B, Mount Sion, Poleberry, Park, Newtown

Map of Waterford City SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

The Waterford Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme concentrated on key pieces of community amenity infrastructure for its use of the Enhancement Funding. This included playground enhancements at Ballybeg along with a similar Enhancement project to the Green in Ballybricken. The main use of the Enhancement Fund was to improve or upgrade existing recreation and amenity infrastructure for community use.

The Local Development Officer built on this and developed Seed Funding proposals in partnership with key stakeholders. One example is the proposal, developed through engagement with Waterford Cultural Quarter, to contribute to the progression of a cultural hub in the city centre given the concentration of migrant communities in pockets of the Inner City. The continued integration and support for these communities will be a strong focus for the programme in 2023.

Working collaboratively with the Waterford Community Safety Partnership Pilot and the Healthy Waterford Programme on shared objectives will also be a strong theme for the Waterford programme in 2023.



SHC Launch in Waterford

Carrickphierish Healthy Green Spaces

Case study



Carrickphierish is an area within the northwest suburbs of Waterford City, Seed Funding from the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme was used to progress the concept of a Landscape Masterplan for the green corridors along Carrickphierish, including a design on the urban park concept which would consider healthy green spaces and physical activity infrastructure for all ages and abilities.

The project is a multiagency one and plans to engage with the community in a meaningful way. The project aligns with the activity of the Waterford Community Safety Partnership pilot who are developing a community plan for the area from recent funding awarded.

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities engagement with the local community around green healthy spaces is enabling an early and practical means for the local community to get involved in shaping their local environment, gaining a greater understanding of the health determinants whilst developing healthier spaces and outcomes for their community. The design considers connectivity, play, active recreation, and biodiversity as part of an overall planning process with the Carrickphierish community.

Further Seed Funding has also been garnered for the delivery of initial identified elements of the urban park concept, and the Local Development Officer will be working with the relevant stakeholders (for example; Waterford Council Housing & Community section, SICAP, Waterford Sport Partnership, Community Safety Partnership, Active Cities, Carrickphierish Library and Healthy Waterford) to identify and source the necessary funding to deliver the healthy spaces project for the Carrickphierish community.

HSE programmes in the Waterford area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

St Bridget's Family Resource Centre

Social Prescribing

Sacred Heart Family Resource Centre

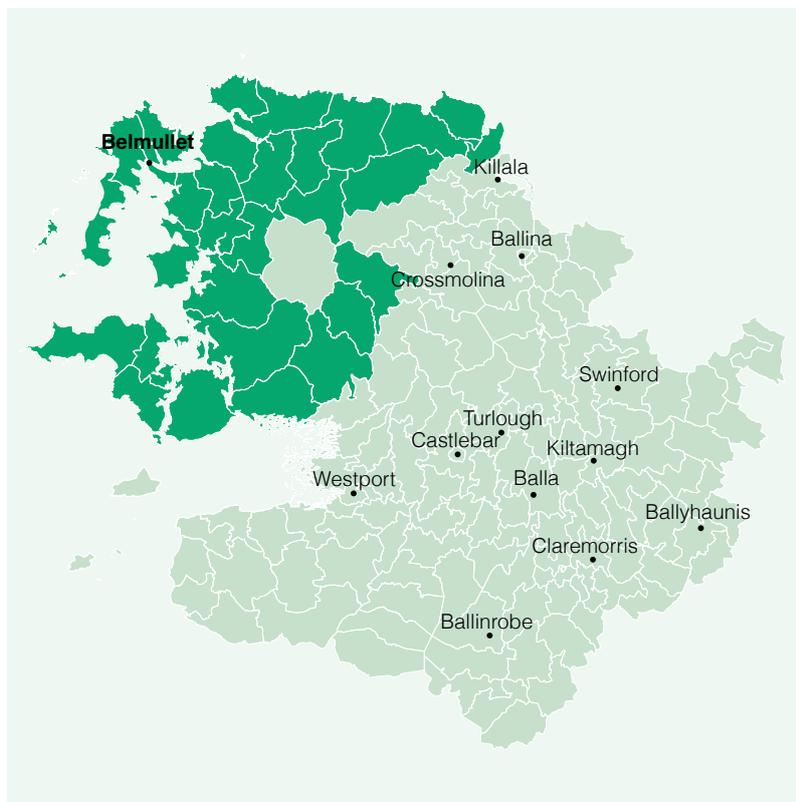
Parenting Programme

Brill Family Resource Centre

Healthy Food Made Easy

Sacred Heart Family Resource Centre

3.19 West Mayo (Mayo)



Local Development Officer

Mairead Carney

HSE Coordinator

Paul Gillen

Electoral Districts

An Geata Mór Thuaidh, An Geata Mór Theas, Knockadaff, Muingnabo, Beldergmore, Ballycastle, Knocknalower, Glenamoy, Kilfian West, Muings, Glencastle, Goolamore, Bangor, Sheskin, Rathhill, Ballycroy North, Ballycroy South, Bunaveela, Doega, Corraun Achill, Achill, Slievemore, Barroosky, Belmullet, Lackan North, Lackan South, Derry, Newport West, Srahmore

Map of West Mayo SHC Area

- Sláintecare Healthy Communities
- Settlements
- Electoral Divisions

Mayo County Council’s focus for the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, targeting the Northwest of the county, has been one of listening to communities, mapping of activity, and developing partnerships with relevant stakeholders to improve the health outcomes and quality of life of the local community. The Enhancement Funding allocation was used to great effect in delivering physical activity infrastructure within rural settings, enabling accessibility to some key natural resources within the area, and proved influential in allowing the Local Development Officer to mobilise within the areas with immediate impact.

The use of Seed Funding was also impactful with measures integrated with Climate Action responses to highlight the synergies between health and climate outcomes. An Educate by Nature outdoor health initiative was also designed to engage with the blue and green natural environment of northwest Mayo whilst incorporating mental health, wellbeing, and environmental stewardship. An innovative open sea water safety community engagement programme was also part of the Seed Fund allocation and has helped gain traction with further work with the local community.



The Music Circle, Ballycroy

The multi-agency approach to address the wider determinants of health was also evident with the Creative Ireland pilot exploring closer collaboration between local arts and health sectors in the area of social prescribing. This initiative will assist G.P.s and other health practitioners to refer people to local arts and creative initiatives where this would be beneficial for their wellbeing and there certainly will be good learning for the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme from this Mayo pilot. All these areas along with food insecurity are themes planned for further progression in 2023.

Enabling Physical Environment

Case study



The Mayo Sláintecare Healthy Communities covers the Erris Peninsula, from Lacken down to Newport and all the way to Achill and it has attempted to provide the appropriate enabling infrastructure to promote more active living and remove barriers to same. This way of working has been delivered by Mayo County Council in the key settlements of the designated area and include the 5km loop enhancement at Erris Head which caters for the successful park run and caters for all abilities. The Achill walking trail supporting those with low mobility, and additional layered supports including fit stick stations and local leadership activation programmes, are further examples of the enabling effort. These actions, coupled with the Achill GAA walking track enhancement, have provided significant opportunity for physical and mental wellbeing improvements, whilst also addressing the complex issue of rural and social isolation within Northwest Mayo.

Further detail on the breadth and scope of Mayo County Council's enabling physical environment efforts across all its Directorates can be obtained by visiting

<https://youtu.be/W0Gj4LtZOI4>

HSE programmes in the Mayo area are delivered by:

We Can Quit

North East Mayo Development Company

Social Prescribing

The Family Centre Castlebar

Parenting Programme

Foroige

Healthy Food Made Easy

North East Mayo Development Company



Mayo Rural Links Poles Programme

3.20 Dublin City Community Co-operative

Project Coordinator

Catherine Heaney



The Dublin City Community Co-op Healthy Communities Project is based in Dublin North East Inner City (NEIC). The NEIC experiences higher levels of disadvantage than the wider Dublin city area. There is also greater ethnic diversity in this area than when compared nationally. As a result of inadequate income and resources, people may be excluded and marginalised and unable to fully participate in society. People living in disadvantaged communities often face multiple issues that are interacting such as unemployment, education disadvantage, poor quality accommodation, poor health status, addiction, social exclusion, and marginalisation.

The Dublin City Community Co-op was successful in the tender process in 2020 to implement a sustainable healthy communities model and funding was provided by the Department of Health and the NEIC Initiative to establish a Healthy Communities Project (HCP) which would be the pre-cursor to the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme. The Dublin City Community Co-op Healthy Communities Project is now funded under the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme and is the 20th site.

The HCP Health Team currently consists of a full-time Project Coordinator, a Social Prescribing Link Worker, a Community Health Worker and two part-time Community Health Workers. The Project is responsible for the delivery of the Healthy Food Made Easy course, We Can Quit Stop Smoking Programme as well as a Social Prescribing Programme in the NEIC. It also provides the Smoke Free Homes Campaign, a six-week Wellbeing and Stress Management course, an eight-week Health Literacy course, a six-week men's health programme and Social Prescribing Coffee Mornings. The HCP has also worked with the National Cancer Control Programme and the National Screening Service on a number of different pieces of work.

Case Study



Health Literacy is a thread which is woven throughout all our work in the project and is an underpinning principle when working with those who access our services. In 2021, the HCP ran an online workshop in partnership with the National Adult Literacy Agency for Health and Community Professionals on the topic of Health Literacy and how to communicate health information to patients and clients. The HCP used this as an opportunity to establish a Health Literacy Audit Working Group which was formed with the purpose of conducting a Signage, Wayfinding and Health Literacy Audit of a local Primary Care Centre (PCC). The working group was made up of the HCP Coordinator, Senior Health Promotion Officer, Registered General Nurse working in the PCC, and a Literacy Tutor from Dublin Adult Learning Centre.

The Audit not only included assessing the Signage and Wayfinding in the PCC but also examples of correspondence from various disciplines within the Primary Care Team such as appointment letters. As part of the Audit, the working group also held a consultation session with a group of Literacy Students from Dublin Adult Learning Centre to include their feedback and input in relation to the correspondence letters.

A number of recommendations in relation to the Audit were made, one of which was the provision of the Well Now Health Literacy course to people living in the area and who access the PCC. This course explores different aspects of health including the six types of health, the Social Determinants of Health, physical activity, nutrition, how to access local health services, using technology to community and learn about health and communicating in health settings.

The programme also includes a site visit to the PCC to meet with members of the Primary Care Team and talk about the services provided in the building. This allows the participants an opportunity to ask questions and interact with the health professionals outside of a medical consultation.

The HCP provided this programme in partnership with Dublin Adult Literacy Centre and participants included a number of individuals who had taken part in the consultation workshop for the Health Literacy Audit. The programme was well received and very well attended over the eight weeks. Participants on the programme reported that they felt more confident asking their GP to explain health issues in a way that they can understand, some reported that they were now more conscious of what food they were eating, and others said that they learned about services in the PCC that they did not realise were being delivered there.

The Health Literacy Audit Working Group is an excellent example of a cross sectoral approach to community health which brings together both community and health disciplines to share resources and exchange information on models of practice. This mode of work helps build relationships across sectors and includes the voice of the clients and service users.



Well Now! Group receiving their Certificates

4.0 HSE Area Based Teams

4.1 Quit Smoking

The smoking cessation service as part of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities (SHC) programme includes the provision of the “We Can Quit” stop smoking programmes and a dedicated stop smoking advisor delivering a 1-1 stop smoking service in each of the selected SHC areas.

We Can Quit (WCQ) is a friendly and supportive programme, providing group behavioural support, nicotine replacement therapy and other stop smoking medication, to help attendees quit smoking and stay quit for good. We Can Quit programmes are delivered over 7-12 weeks in local communities by community facilitators with support from HSE Stop Smoking Advisors. The We Can Quit programme has been proven to support people around their smoking by utilising peer and social support as well as professional input.

The programme has been very successful across the Sláintecare Healthy Communities areas. Delivery partner organisations including Family Resource Centres and Local Development Companies delivered 37 We Can Quit programmes (women only, men only and mixed gender programmes) across the 19 selected SHC areas in 2022. Over 300 people participated in the programme, which greatly contributed to community members’ efforts to quit smoking. Participants highlighted the benefits of the group setting, they felt it was supportive environment and it was great to be able to learn from others in their group. They also said there was a “sense of togetherness”, that they felt there were not on their own. Whilst attending the group programme, it is important that participants also get 1-1 support. The programme participants get access to 1-1 weekly stop smoking support from a Stop Smoking Advisor, usually over the phone, who can go through any particular challenges people may be experiencing that week outside of the group setting.

We Can Quit

Case study



Caroline attended the WE CAN QUIT programme in Limerick City in 2022. She was a long-time smoker, who first started smoking when she was 13 years old. She felt over the years that her health was suffering, and she was starting to feel the effects of smoking “I had very little energy; I started getting caught for breath when walking, especially on the hills”. She felt that this was getting worse, and she needed to do something about it. She joined the local WE CAN QUIT group and immediately felt supported. She said the group “felt like family”. She got to know the others in the group really well as she felt “everyone was in the same boat”. This really helped her on her quit journey as she felt everyone was in it together.

With help from the WE CAN QUIT programme and her Stop Smoking Advisor, Caroline has successfully quit smoking. She is delighted, she feels much better energy-wise, she is enjoying walks much more and she has her sense of smell back. She has also noticed the financial benefit “Cigarettes cost €15 a pack, I was buying three, even four packets a week”. She plans on using this money to treat herself to a present or two each week now instead.

Caroline shared her story at the Sláintecare Healthy Communities launch in Limerick in November 2022

Each Sláintecare Healthy Community area has a dedicated HSE Stop Smoking Advisor who provides 1:1 support to help those who smoke within the community with quit attempts, including the provision of free Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Stop Smoking medication.

Through the programme, Stop Smoking Advisors have established new stop smoking clinics across generalised community services, mental health services, maternity, and acute services. They have developed partnerships with local pharmacies to facilitate the provision of free Nicotine Replacement Therapy and Stop Smoking medication. They also promote and support the extension of smoke free environments e.g, family resource centres, creches, local authorities, beaches, playgrounds, parks etc. smoke free.

Stop Smoking Service

Case study



Ray, a long-term smoker, first heard about the stop smoking service whilst attending a men's group in Fettercairn. He has been smoking for over forty years. Neither Ray, nor his family, thought that he would be able to quit. The convenience of the course made it easy for Ray to stay engaged. The time suited him as he was in the area anyway so he could easily pop in for his weekly chat with his Stop Smoking Advisor. The free nicotine replacement therapy appealed to him, and he enjoyed using the CO2 monitor – it was a positive visual thing for him, seeing his progress week on week really encouraged him to keep going.

Using Stop Smoking Services has positively affected Ray's life. He saw huge improvements in his health, as did his family. So much so that his daughter who would have been a social smoker gave up smoking too, as a result. He would highly recommend the stop smoking service. In Ray's words "there are health benefits, you are saving money, it is free and accessible". He also mentioned the great support he got from his Stop Smoking Advisor, he felt it was much easier to quit when you have someone to speak to in person, over the phone or even just a text "it's totally different from trying to do it on your own".

Ray shared his story at the Sláintecare Healthy Communities launch in Tallaght in October 2022.

Stop Smoking Advisor

Case study



Jodie was a frequent smoker. Last year she became pregnant and downloaded a pregnancy app. The app provided Jodie with information on the baby's growth etc. One day she saw that her baby's lungs were starting to develop – this knowledge prompted Jodie to try to give up smoking. Her family didn't think she could do it, but Jodie said once she had one week down, she grew more confident and knew she would succeed.

Her family are so proud of her. She feels there is a lot of stigma around women smoking when pregnant but praised her Stop Smoking Advisor who she said was "phenomenal".

He made her feel so comfortable and was so understanding. According to Jodie the 1:1 stop smoking service is great "it's a brilliant service and its free which is even better because a lot of people can't afford the Nicotine Replacement Therapy etc." She would highly recommend the 1:1 stop smoking service to anyone who wants to give up smoking

Jodie shared her story at the Sláintecare Healthy Communities launch in Clondalkin in December 2022.

4.2 Healthy Eating

Through SHC, the HSE are providing resourcing to community organisations to address Community Food and Food Poverty in the 19 selected SHC areas. This consists of two elements:

- The delivery of the Healthy Food Made Easy community cooking programme.
- The appointment of a Community Food and Nutrition Worker in each of the 19 selected areas.

Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME) is a six-week community cooking programme which aims to provide a basic nutrition and cookery course to help people adopt a healthy diet, plan meals on a budget and cook easy meals.

Community facilitators employed by local community organisations such as Family Resource Centres and Local Partnership companies deliver HFME. For HFME to be successful it is important that local organisations engage with community groups.

In 2022, important relationships were built with Traveller Organisations, Family Resource Centres, Youth Services, Social Prescribing Services and Primary Care Services etc. This ensured successful delivery of HFME across the 19 SHC areas. Over 220 HFME courses were delivered in SHC areas in 2022.

Healthy Food Made Easy Men's Group – Inishowen Development Partnership

Case study



Healthy Food Made Easy (HFME) is a 6-week community cooking programme which aims to provide a basic nutrition and cookery course to help people adopt a healthy diet, plan meals on a budget and cook easy meals. Inishowen Development Partnership in collaboration with SHC and the HSE has delivered 12 HFME programmes in 2022 engaging with a diverse range of community groups such as the Donegal Traveller project, disability services, youth, families, and men's groups. The programme has been an overall success, with participants providing positive feedback as seen in the feedback below.

Robert

"I enjoyed every bit of the cooking class. I don't cook outside of the class, but I learned a lot. I learned that too much butter is bad for your cholesterol and on why it is important to cut back on sugar.

The class was good fun, and I made a lot of friends. I am looking forward to taking part in the food waste course now."

Martin

"The class has been great – it has motivated me to cook more and healthier food at home. I have been referred to see a dietitian and this class has been good at giving me healthy tips."

But it was the social side of the class I enjoyed the most. There was great craic every week with the other men, and it was an overall very positive experience. I would definitely recommend other men to take part in future cooking courses with Niamh and Inishowen Development Partnership."

David signed up for the Healthy Food Made Easy cooking class because he was interested in learning more about cooking in a healthier way. However, it was the social aspect of the class that was most rewarding for him.

"This is a great inclusive class for men of different abilities, and it was lovely to see men connecting with other men with disabilities. They said they have never seen a class gel so well. Everyone was very respectful of each other," said David.

"I think men feel at their most comfortable when they are doing something practical. We all really enjoyed the cooking and to have 15 men here every week was great to see. People came from different places, but we worked together and made friends. There was a lot of openness, and it was great to be part of that."

All three men shared their story at the Sláintecare Healthy Food Made Easy program in Greencastle, Inishowen, Co. Donegal in December 2022.

4.3 Parenting



The aim of the SHC parenting programmes is to deliver a defined set of general parenting programmes (Triple P or Parents Plus) in each of the 19 Areas.

These parenting programmes are provided to families with children aged 0-12 years, who do not meet the current threshold for support and therapeutic intervention.

Parents Plus

Athy

Case study



Michelle attended the Parents Plus Parenting Programme in Athy. She has a four-year-old daughter Ella, and she felt the mornings were a real struggle in their house. Between trying to get Ella ready for school and her and her partner ready for work, she felt everyone was very stressed in the mornings.

She heard about the parenting programme in her local area and decided to try it as it was free and the timing on a Tuesday evening suited her as she could go after work. Michelle found the facilitators very helpful and learned lots of tips and tricks at the group. She has made a few new friends from attending the group who she now often meets in the park at weekends, and she looks forward to attending the group on a Tuesday evening.

Since attending the programme Michelle feels her home is much calmer, Ella has noticed the positive changes as have mom and dad. The mornings are now a lot calmer and not as rushed as Michelle has a structure and a morning routine in place. Michelle feels more confident as a parent, which she feels have a positive knock-on effect for her daughter. Michelle strongly endorses the programme and is telling everyone she knows that is it “one of the best things I’ve done”.

Michelle shared her story at the Sláintecare Healthy Communities launch in Athy in October 2022

4.4 Making Every Contact Count

To encourage and support more people to make healthier choices, the Making Every Contact Count (MECC) programme works with local health professionals to ensure they have the capability to deliver brief interventions and advice to all patients regarding healthy behaviours (smoking, alcohol use, physical activity, mental wellbeing, diet, and nutrition).

As a result of SHC investment, nine MECC Mobilisers have been employed to work in each Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs) to drive the implementation of the MECC Framework locally and to provide direct support and leadership for staff in these respective areas.

Rosemary Plant shared her experience working as the MECC mobiliser in CHO7 at the Clondalkin launch in December 2022. She spoke about the different parts of MECC training, the online e-learning programme, and the half-day workshop. Upon completion of MECC training health professionals should be able to implement MECC in their workplaces so that the public can benefit from a MECC intervention at every visit, making every contact count. Over 2000 front line healthcare staff completed the MECC e-learning and face-to-face workshops in 2022.

4.5 Social Prescribing



As part of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, Social Prescribing link workers have been employed by local community organisations to deliver an integrated social prescribing service with clear referral pathways from GPs, Mental Health Services, Primary Care and Older People's Services in each of the 19 areas. People can also self-refer to these programmes and service. The aim is to empower individuals to access a range of community-based options and health service programmes and services to improve their health and wellbeing.

Lisa Marron, the Social Prescribing link worker in Mayo describes the service as a way to connect people to themselves and to their local community "Social Prescribing is about connecting people in with themselves and out into the community and using the services and resources that are already out there to improve their health and wellbeing". She said they tend to see people at transitional points in their lives e.g, following a bereavement when maybe they are feeling a bit lonely or isolated, when people have moved to a new area or when people become parents for the first time. There are many situations where Social Prescribing can help support people and she encourages people to avail of this confidential one to one support.

Social Prescribing Case study



Samantha is a mother of four from Ballymun who availed of the Social Prescribing service in her area. She felt she was struggling at home; her youngest child has developmental issues and Samantha was not really interacting with people outside of her kids and she was finding it hard to cope. She met Michelle her Social Prescribing link worker who introduced her to a number of services that were available in her area, one of which was baby massage.

She found the baby massage classes brilliant. They made her leave the house and meet other mothers and her ten-month-old had the opportunity to meet other babies, which was great for him too. She felt the classes helped her bond more with her child.

Samantha feels Social Prescribing is "a safe place to talk and it helps so much".

She says it has improved her relationship with her kids and made them closer. It has opened so many doors for her and she would recommend people avail of Social Prescribing, Samantha feels "there are many services out there that people probably don't even know about, and Social Prescribing can help you find a service that will help you".

Samantha shared her story at the Sláintecare Healthy Communities launch in Ballymun in December 2022.

4.6 Integrated Alcohol Services (Cork and Limerick)

Under Sláintecare Healthy Communities, new Integrated Alcohol Services are being rolled out in community settings to provide support for people with harmful alcohol use and their families. The community-based team consists of four addiction counsellors, a Nurse, and a Project Worker. In 2022, services commenced in Cork and Limerick. It is hoped this service will be rolled out across the country in the coming years. The services work closely with Alcohol Liaison Nurses in hospitals so that there is a joined-up approach to service delivery across community and hospital settings.

4.7 Community Food and Nutrition Workers

Each Sláintecare Healthy Communities area has its own unique characteristics, and the Community Food and Nutrition Workers (CF&NWs) are identifying and responding to the needs of the communities in which they are positioned.

The CF&NWs are working with local communities to examine the local food environments and to identify what challenges are being faced with regards to food insecurity. They are building relationships with a range of voluntary, community and statutory organisations, aiming to implement targeted initiatives to tackle these challenges from within these communities. In some regions, food mapping has been undertaken to assess the local food environment in depth.

With a remit to build capacity, knowledge and skills across communities, CF&NWs are supporting the delivery of Healthy Food Made Easy programmes in the Sláintecare regions. This programme supports participants to learn about healthy eating, develop cooking skills and to make healthy food choices on a budget.

Community Food and Nutrition Workers are also supporting the delivery of other Healthy Food for Life guidelines focused workshops and community programmes including weaning workshops and healthy eating for older adults, in response to the needs of the local population.

CF&NWs are working to improve knowledge, skills, and the holistic food environment in communities, by identifying local needs and responding, with evidence-based initiatives, to address food insecurity and reduce health inequalities at the community level.

Food Mapping – Donegal Gaeltacht

Case study



Food mapping is the process of gathering information about where people can grow, buy, and eat food in their local area. Food mapping was undertaken by the CF&NW in the Donegal Gaeltacht area in 2022, in order to evaluate the local food system.

Information was gathered from multiple sources including online directories, Google maps, social media, and local knowledge to capture a snapshot of the food environment. Classifications were used to group the data: production, processing, retail, out of home consumption, food banks, etc. The mapping exercise was used to identify clusters and gaps in services in the area, as well as potential barriers to consuming a healthy diet.

Access, availability, and affordability were found to be the main geographic themes having the greatest impact on consuming a healthy diet in the region. Distance to travel to purchase healthy food combined with a lack of public transport is a real challenge for the rural population. It was also confirmed that some areas have a high density of food outlets selling foods that are high in saturated fat, salt, or sugar, in comparison with a low density of outlets selling fresh nutritious produce. This data will inform the Sláintecare team in the region going forward.

Community Kitchen 2022

Case study



This case study focuses on the support that Sláintecare Healthy Communities offered to Limerick Food Partnership (LFP) in providing funding to install a new kitchen space in the city centre. It was deemed that Limerick City needed a city-based space that would be made available to different community groups to use who have limited or no access to kitchen facilities.

PAUL Partnership hosts Limerick Food Partnership (LFP), a strategic collaboration between voluntary organisations, community organisations, and statutory bodies. Its key focus is to address food poverty through raising awareness, improving access, and increasing the supply of healthy food options to its target communities in Limerick city and county. The Community Food and Nutrition Worker in CHO3, Limerick city works as part of the Limerick Food Partnership team in PAUL Partnership with specific roles and responsibilities. The community kitchen was planned by the LFP Co-Ordinator with the support of the CFNW. The planning, development, and installation of this new city centre-based community kitchen by LFP in conjunction with LCCC and funded by Sláintecare Healthy Communities took place in 2022.

Limerick City and County Council (LCCC) own the Tait Community Centre, and they agreed to Limerick Food Partnership refurbishing a part of the space. The centre is located next door to the Barrack St Primary Health Care Centre in Tate Community Centre, Lord Edward Street, Limerick. There was a small existing kitchen in the space for shared usage between Limerick City Community Radio and residents which was taken out and replaced with a new kitchen. The kitchen was ordered and installed in November 2022. The launch of the community kitchen took place on the 1st of December 2022. Members of community groups, funders, LFP steering group, Sláintecare, LCCC, the radio, and the residents attended the launch.

The kitchen is a valuable asset for Sláintecare Healthy Communities and for the wider LFP in meeting its objectives in the city and county. The kitchen is available to be used for cooking, healthy eating classes, and other small projects by community groups. There are a number of groups using the kitchen since January 2023 including, albeit not limited to, the following: one Healthy Food Made Easy class facilitated by a LFP trained HFME tutor, a group of Ukrainian mothers with no access to kitchen facilities have used the facilities to cook healthy meals, and a Family Support Worker has facilitated a healthy eating class with a small group of vulnerable younger adults. The HFME tutor delivering the programme in the community kitchen described the space as 'ideal for our needs as it is very open so I can supervise all the participants simultaneously' and 'the group are really enjoying HFME and using the kitchen facilities'.



Kitchen facilities at the Healthy Food Made Easy Course, Limerick

5.0 Programme Description

5.1 Key Partnerships

The success of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities (SHC) Programme is, and will be, dependent on the joint working of a series of partnerships, community groups and alliances in the various communities themselves.

This multi-component interagency programme is designed to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities in a number of designated communities through partnership and collaboration. The **HSE and Local Authorities** act as key delivery and commissioning agents for SHC, with the SHC Local Development Officer, based in the Local Authority and the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Coordinator based in the HSE, giving joint local leadership to the work. This collaborative approach is enhanced by a wider alliance of local delivery partners. The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme seeks to support members of the communities in a holistic way by addressing their wellbeing needs, providing both individual and group lifestyle behavioural supports, in addition to engaging with the community to enhance their local environment. This is also done by addressing other social factors or social determinants of their health and wellbeing. So, there are several different components to the SHC, with up to four or five different partner agencies delivering the various components in any specific SHC area. These agencies or partners are already invested in the target communities with both the local knowledge and, critically, the local relationships, to make an impact with individual and group health and wellbeing programmes.

Some of the key delivery partners include the **Local Development Companies (LDCs)** who engage at community level and work daily to engage with more isolated groups. They are governed by partnerships between the state, and community and voluntary sector, with a mission to deliver programmes and services that meet the needs of local communities to improve quality of life. Their delivery of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme gives a strategic alignment with the Sláintecare Healthy Communities' target of reducing health inequalities. In many instances it is these LDCs who are now delivering the Healthy Food Made Easy Programme (HFME) and employing the Community Food and Nutrition Worker under the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme.

Family Resource Centres (FRC) have also been a major stakeholder in the early roll out of programmes through SHC such as parenting and social prescribing. These centres are operated and located within a community-based model of family support. The centrality of community development in informing the approaches, values and methods underpinning the work of FRCs is a defining feature of their contribution. A further characteristic of FRCs is that they are managed by local voluntary management committees, which are critical in facilitating meaningful participation within communities, and in ensuring local knowledge and accountability. In areas where the Family Resource Centres are delivering on SHC components, they are delivering the likes of the Parenting programme or Social Prescribing. Community agencies and charities like **Barnardos** are delivering on programmes such as parenting and Healthy Food Made Easy, a community cooking programme.

Since the SHC programme was launched, many Local Development Officers, together with their partners, have engaged and gathered feedback from their local target community to further enhance any community specific initiatives. The Enhancement Funding gave the LDO's an opportunity to engage and make tangible differences in the areas based on the feedback from both the public and experienced agencies. Enhancement Fund initiatives include many projects to enhance the community environment for health and wellbeing, examples include greenspaces, improved community facilities and walking and cycling tracks.

5.2 National Coordination

National Coordinator Healthy Ireland Local Government

Vinnie O'Shea

The Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme has a Local Development Officer within the 19 designated areas which spans across 14 Local Authorities. The role of the Local Development Officer is to support and work with the local communities alongside the many community and statutory groups in the designated areas, and work with strategic partners to ensure that the communities are sustainable places to live, where everyone has access to the things, they need to enjoy good health.

The Local Authority role is to help address the wider determinants of health which are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes i.e. *the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age*. As part of this, increasing awareness of the determinants of health across the Local Government sector, across areas of influence within local government e.g. *elected members, engineers, planners etc.* is important. The role is also an enabling one – working with other stakeholders at a local level to tackle health inequalities and such issues, on an intersectoral basis, through collaboration with initiatives with shared objectives such as Age Friendly, Local Sports Partnerships and Community Safety Partnerships.

This activity offers a solid platform to align health outcomes on a county-wide basis through contributing initiatives and new ways of working to the wellbeing element within the Local Economic & Community Plans, which are currently being progressed across all 31 Local Authorities.

The first year of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme has been busy with consistent contact with the Local Development Officers supporting their activity and 3 successful in-person sessions held in 2022 to support their work programmes. Further planning sessions are planned for 2023 including training and upskilling in areas such as using the Place Standard Tool for Placemaking and Health Impact Assessment – both of which will place the Local Development Officers in key wellbeing lead roles for their Local Authorities.

Across the 19 Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme areas, a strong emphasis was given to alignment within the Local Authority wellbeing service programme areas. Initiatives such as the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme, Healthy Ireland Cities & Counties Programme and the Healthy Libraries Programme within the Local Authority environment have the ability and capacity to drive the health & wellbeing agenda, especially where other related initiatives have shared objectives e.g. *Local Sports Partnerships /Age Friendly/Active Cities/Healthy Ireland/Climate Action/Community Safety Partnerships*. National Coordinators of these relevant Local Authority initiatives networked in 2022 to foster such coherent approaches in delivering their programmes at a local level. A regular network session with the Chief Officers of the 14 Local Community development Committees and Department of Health also ensured coherence and an open communication channel to respond to programme issues.

Some initiatives delivered to support the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme centrally include a SharePoint portal developed to assist the 19 Local Development Officers share information/data and collaborate effectively and record progress. A data web portal that captures and interprets relevant local Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme data on an ArcGIS platform, along with a range of other data sets, was initiated near the year-end. This should inform decision making and promote Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme activity and should be available for use in early 2023.

HSE National Coordination

Katie Evans

Sláintecare Healthy Communities is designed to bring about real, measurable change and is based on an understanding of the determinants of health and evidenced-based health and wellbeing programmes. Whilst the local authorities' role in Sláintecare Healthy Communities is to examine the wider determinants of health, for the HSE the investment in health service initiatives is focused on the implementation of an enhanced Health and Wellbeing Programme to improve the health outcomes of people living within the 19 Sláintecare Healthy Communities areas. These initiatives will be delivered through partnership working with a range of partners (HSE, local authorities and community groups) working together to provide dedicated services to build lasting improvements in health and wellbeing.

HSE Health and Wellbeing plays a vital role in the Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme both at a national and local level. There is a Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme Coordinator, who sits at a national level, as part of the HSE Health & Wellbeing team. They are responsible for the planning, coordination, and support of the Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme, oversee activities and programme delivery including stakeholder engagement & communications and ensure the various HSE initiatives are implemented in line with nationally defined frameworks, standards, policies, and resources.

The National Coordinator works closely with the Assistant National Director (AND) Health and Wellbeing, Programme Work stream Leads, Programme Steering Group members and Local Implementation Stakeholders.

Locally Sláintecare Healthy Communities coordinators have been employed across the nine Community Healthcare Organisations (CHOs) to assist with the delivery of the programme. These nine coordinators have an important role in planning, coordinating, and implementing services such as Smoking Cessation, Making Every Contact Count (MECC), Healthy Food Made Easy, Parenting Programmes and Social Prescribing across the 19 Sláintecare Healthy Communities Programme areas. Their role involves building strong working relationships with community and voluntary partners and engaging with these partners to deliver a core group of programmes, which target the specific health and wellbeing needs of people living within these communities. The National and Local Sláintecare Healthy Communities Coordinators work closely together to ensure a high quality and consistent approach to service delivery, ensuring it is aligned to the national strategic approach.

The focus in 2022 was recruitment and service implementation. There was an extensive recruitment process with 46 HSE staff recruited for our area-based teams. Following extensive engagement locally, delivery partners were selected to deliver the suite of evidenced based Health and Wellbeing Programmes and the remaining staff were recruited through our partner agencies (Social Prescribing Link Workers & Community Food and Nutrition Workers). Training and mentoring were also provided. By the end of 2022, all HSE staff were in place and all services operationalised. A Sláintecare Healthy Communities data collection and reporting process was also established, by HSE Health & Wellbeing in 2022, which enables the reporting and monitoring of Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data across the Sláintecare Healthy Communities programme on a quarterly basis, selected based on the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) areas.

5.3 Local Development Companies

Local Development Companies (LDCs), have a long history of working with disadvantaged groups and marginalised communities to deliver needs-based social and economic progression supports and services. In this context, LDCs are using their local knowledge, learnt experience, connections, standing and reach into these communities and with target groups, to encourage and enable active participation in the HCP and in delivering many of the core services. The LDCs' effective partnership relationship with the HSE and local authorities concerning HCP related work is vital in providing for the integrated approach required to achieve results.

Significant progress has been achieved in the delivery of the HCP core services by LDCs across the 19 target areas since full implementation commenced in early 2022. Some of the standout activity includes:

- Some 1200 client registrations and multiple follow-on engagements have been progressed by Social Prescribing Link Workers with respect to enhancing the individuals' physical, mental and/or social health and wellbeing. Typically, the person-centred supports provided included the development of self-determined lifestyle behaviour plans, building awareness and knowledge of local services and signposting to relevant providers, outdoor physical activities including walking groups, creative social café events, signing for wellbeing workshops etc.
- More than 800 mothers and fathers being enabled to enhance their parenting skills to support their children's development. Evidenced-based interventions were organised using parenting groups and workshops with both day and evening time sessions provided to ensure the greatest accessibility possible for mothers and fathers to participate. Subjects covered included – Parents Plus Healthy Families; Parents Plus Early Years; Parents Plus Children focused sessions; Screen-time workshops; Healthy Sleeping Habits workshops and Healthy Eating workshops.



We Can Quit Advertising, Local Development Company Outreach Office, Belturbet, Co Cavan

- Recruiting and training facilitators to deliver community based We Can Quit Smoking Programme sessions. In the various HCP sites at least two We Can Quit Programmes have been delivered having an average of 10 participants, all with a determination to quit smoking and being supported to do so through the interventions provided. The involvement of local GPs and Pharmacists are key facilitating aspects of the Programme delivery.



We Can Quit Programme Ballyjamesduff, Co Cavan

- Healthy Food Made Easy courses provided for over 1500 active participants across the HCP areas. Each of the courses were designed as an enjoyable way to understand and learn about the advantages of healthy and nutritious eating, based on a budget and with easy preparation and cooking techniques. The healthier everyday life benefits derived from these community-based practical courses have multiple outcomes and are impactful across the age cohorts for individuals and within a family context.
- Community Food Nutrition Workers and Stop Smoking Advisors being recruited by the LDCs with resourcing from the HSE to help develop and progress related HCP work in the targeted communities.

A unique feature of LDCs' social inclusion work with individuals, families and communities is the complementary wrap-around support provision that complements any primary intervention being delivered. Such approach is a fundamental aspect of working from a whole-person perspective in assisting with the realisation of meaningful and sustainable change outcomes. This is particularly important with respect to HCP associated objectives and services having regard to the social determinants of health and their key impact on good health, positive wellbeing, and improved quality of life. The LDCs' representative body, the Irish Local Development Network (ILDN), is continuing to engage with the Dept. of Health to explore how this wrap around support provision, made possible through inclusion focused programmes (involving the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP); the Area Based Childhood Programme (ABC); Employment Support Programmes such as the Local Area Employment Service (LAES); Labour Market Activation Programmes including Community Employment & Tús) among others, can be harnessed in supplementing HCP services to ensure real and lasting health and wellbeing benefits are achieved in the targeted communities.



Men's Shed Bailieborough, Co Cavan presenting their food following a Healthy Food Made Easy Programme

Another essential aspect of the HCP practice is the use of collaboration to maximise resources and ensure the greatest benefits result from the associated work. As part of this approach, Health and Wellbeing Committees comprising membership drawn from relevant agencies and groups locally within the HCP areas have been established. An important part of the work of these Committees is to share experienced learning in order to have a better understanding of what works in organising to effectively address identified local needs. In this context, LDCs are also playing a proactive role in supporting the operation of the Committees and developments concerning the HCP profile and related work. LDCs are committed to be central and use their capacity and know-how in supporting the integrated approach required to maximise the HCP potential in progressing a health equality agenda leading to healthier lifestyles, positive wellbeing, and improved quality of life in the targeted communities. We will continue to achieve results by the ongoing development of effective working together relationships.

5.4 Family Resource Centres

The Family Resource Centre (FRC) programme is Ireland's largest National Family and Community-based support programme, core funded by Tusla – The Child and Family Agency. There are 121 FRCs located across Ireland, many of which are located within the SHC areas. As FRCs are well established within local communities they are ideally placed to deliver SHC initiatives at a local level. The FRCs are core delivery partners of the SHC Programme.

Family Cookery Programme with Hospital Family Resource Centre

Case study



Hospital Family Resource Centre Family Cookery Programme, in partnership with Ballyhoura Development CLG under their Community Food Initiative (CFI) funding stream, started this project in 2018 with families. To date we have delivered 11 programmes supporting over 104 families across the east Limerick Area. We also delivered this programme during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing families with weekly food packs and online tutor support at home while under lockdown.

The project is aimed at parents with children of primary school age. Parents are supported weekly by a trained Limerick Clare Training Education Board (LCETB) tutor who supported the parents to plan easy to cook healthy family meals from budgeting, shopping, and preparing & cooking meals that improved their family's health and overall wellbeing. The project was linked with local primary schools, agencies, services across east Limerick to ensure that parents who are hard to reach due to economic difficulties, no transport, poor mental health, disabilities are supported to attend.

Each family receives a weekly ingredient pack and recipe from the 101 square meals cookbook. They also received their own personalised family cookbook folder in which to put their information tool kits handouts and weekly recipes. LCETB provide a tutor to support the weekly sessions with families with a focus on family cooking skills, family communication and learning in a fun an inclusive environment. Each week the families (Parent & Children) prepare a meal together which they can take home in an oven proof dish provided to them on attending the course.

Many partnership agencies are involved in the Programme, including Limerick Clare Training Education Board, REACH-ETB, Rural Link, Safe Food Ireland, MABS, and student dieticians from University of Limerick.



Family Cookery Programme with Hospital Family Resource Centre

Sacred Heart Family Resource Centre

Case study



A gentleman in his mid-70s was referred into Waterford Social Prescribing Service by WICOP, a service specifically for community-based care of the elderly. The man had retired from a busy career and was now a carer for his wife, who had dementia. He described feeling a huge loss of identity following these changes.

Following conversation with his one of the coordinators, the man identified a number of past and present interests that he had been neglecting. The following points of interest from the conversation arose:

- The man had never cooked before and was now the sole cook in the household.
- The man had worked in London for many years and enjoyed the theatre scene there but had not been to the theatre in Waterford.
- The man was worried about his physical health and wanted to stay fit and well for as long as possible in order to support his wife.

The coordinator identified the following pathways for the man to follow.

- The Sacred Heart FRC houses a men's cookery group, run by an ETB tutor, once a week. The man joined this group and is thoroughly enjoying same.
- The man was able to access a complimentary night at the theatre with his wife thanks to funding Social Prescribing received for a Creative Ireland pilot project. He is now familiar with the theatre and intends to go there regularly with his wife, as they thoroughly enjoyed the night.
- The man is attending a Men on the Move exercise programme via Waterford Sports Partnership and is also linked in with one of our countywide walking groups once weekly. He reports that he has noticed an increase in his fitness, but moreover has made great friends and looks forward to the groups each week.

These linkages to key organisations within our communities are so important for us in providing the most holistic service possible to clients, as this case study illustrates

5.5 Principal Officer Group

The Department of Health are working across Government with an oversight group to coordinate interventions and policy responses. The membership of this group in 2022 included Principal Officers from the following Government Departments:

Principal Officer Working Group Membership

Department
Department of Justice
Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine
Department of Rural and Community Development
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Inclusion and Youth
Department of Education
Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sports and Media
Department of Social Protection
Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
Department of Further and Higher Education, Innovation and Science
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government

5.6 Evaluation Working Group

An Evaluation Working Group was established to monitor and evaluate the SHC programme as it progresses. Membership of this group consists of representatives from the Department of Health, the HSE, the Local Authority, the Health Research Board, and Sport Ireland. The group will be convened in 2023 with a view to evaluating progress to date.

In February 2022, the Health Research Board (HRB), commissioned by the Department of Health, produced an evidence brief on place-based initiatives to improve health and wellbeing outcomes in deprived communities (HRB, 2022). The Evidence Brief ¹¹ suggests that in order to establish causality for the programme the following four features of evaluation should be present:

1. Matched comparison groups or counterfactuals that enabled ascertainment of what would have happened in the absence of the initiative.
2. Longitudinal data from studies or administrative data.
3. Statistical analyses that controlled for measured confounders and took advantage of the longitudinal data.
4. More than one source of evidence.

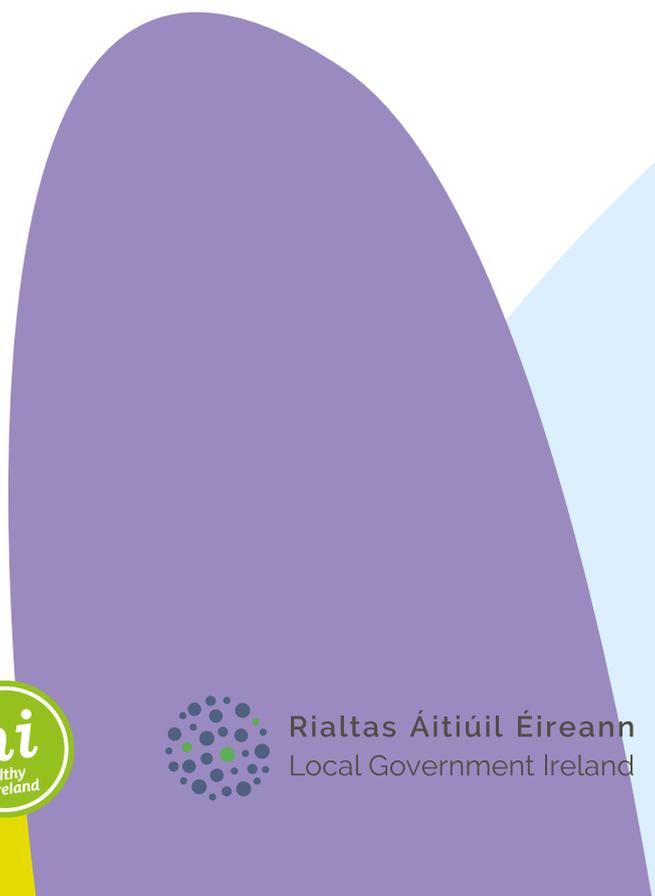
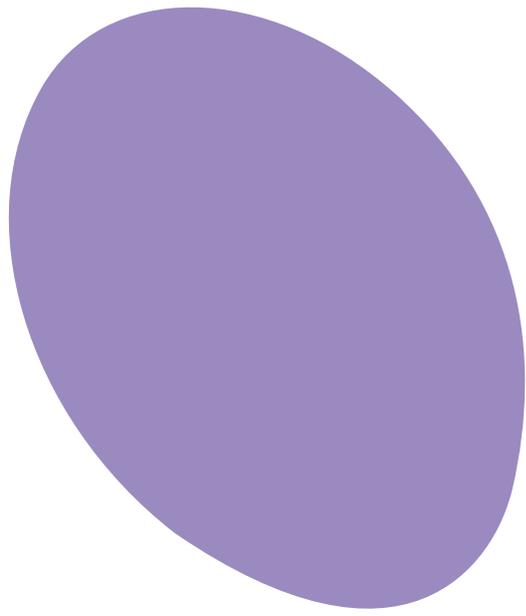
It is planned to conduct a multi-agency data audit and a process to develop a theory of change, at both local and national level, in 2023.

¹¹ Keane, M. Long, J. & Lee, C. 2022 Place-based initiatives to improve health and well-being outcomes in deprived communities: Evidence brief, Health Research Board, Unpublished





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