

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022



**Men's  
Development  
Network**

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Development  
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# FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR

It is with a sense of great pride that I, on behalf of the Board of Directors, present the Annual Report of the Men's Development Network (MDN) for 2022.

2022 was a hugely significant year for the Men's Development Network as we acknowledged 25 years of programme delivery on engaging men and boys on their health, wellbeing, gender equality and ending gender-based violence. From our small beginnings in 1997, the organisation has grown to provide guidance and leadership on the appropriate methods of engaging men and boys and meeting the demands of much-needed services for men, boys, and their families.

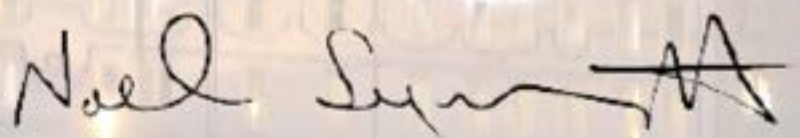
The year started with a series of MDN@25 online webinars on various topics and progressed throughout the year where we had amazing presenters from near and far. We also held our first international symposium "New Conversations". Opened by the Minister of Justice Helen McEntee TD, it consisted of two keynote speakers and 19 other contributors from three continents and 11 different countries. Over 180 people attended the event in which the best remote technologies were utilised allowing for a successful networking and learning event.

MDN's sphere of influence has also grown, and we now operate programmes on behalf of several Government Departments, Agencies and Local Authorities including the Department of Justice, Department of Health, Department of Agriculture, Tusla and The Health Service Executive. Other partners, both national and international include Educational Institutions, the GAA, the National Women's Council and Ruhama.

This Annual Report sets out in detail the existing services we operate for victims of Domestic Violence (MEND), Male Advice Line (MAL), and other related client support services. The Report also captures significant developments that have taken place within our Health & Development Programmes through our new programmes FarmConnect, and Walking the Talk. Significant work has taken place in the area of engaging men and boys as allies for gender equality and in ending Gender-Based Violence through the White Ribbon Secondary School Programme. The Board is especially pleased with MDN's work to improve the lives of victims of Domestic Violence, both female and male.

Another milestone for the organisation was the opening and renaming of our refurbished head office in Waterford "Equality House". To be able to provide a wonderful environment for staff, our clients and service users is a matter of pride for all of us all. The official opening by Mary Butler, TD, Minister of State at the Department of Health with responsibility for Mental Health and Older People took place in September. I would like to thank her for all the help she has been to the organisation over the years.

I would also like, on behalf of the Board, to pay tribute to the quality and dedication of the staff of MDN who, over a number of years, have shown great commitment to achieving the outcomes desired by the programme funders. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our funders for their continued support and assure them of our continued commitment.



**NOEL SYNNOTT**

Chairperson





# Acknowledging 25 Years

For over a quarter of a century, the Men's Development Network (MDN) have been allies in advocating for men's health and wellbeing, personal development, gender equality and ending Gender-Based Violence

## Grassroots

Founded in 1997 when men working in the social care field, probation, youth work, addictions, academia, and health came together to discuss what was rapidly becoming a crisis. The Men's Development Network emerged from a vision of creating a safe space for men to share their experiences, seek guidance, and address the unique challenges they face in modern society. It was recognised that the rigid societal norms surrounding masculinity often discouraged men from discussing their emotions or seeking help when needed. This lack of support could lead to mental health struggles, relationship issues, and a general sense of isolation. This was not only

having a negative impact on men, women, and children but also on the communities we live in, on society, and across many broad professional fields of social care.

With an understanding that men's issues are complex and varied, the "South East Men's Network" as it was originally known, set out to provide a platform that embraces diversity and inclusivity. They aimed to break down stereotypes that hindered men from embracing their vulnerability and seeking assistance when facing personal or emotional challenges.



## Breaking Barriers and Fostering Change

Through the years, MDN moved from a regional organisation to a national non-profit working with transforming masculinities in the areas of health and wellbeing, personal development promoting gender equality and engaging men in ending Gender-Based Violence. We do this through a partnership lens in the delivery of 4 national programmes:

- (1) Engage National Men's Health Training Programme
- (2) MEND (Men Ending Domestic Abuse)
- (3) The Male Advice Line – national freephone service for male victims of domestic abuse
- (4) White Ribbon Campaign & Capacity Building Programme. We also run regional initiatives such as the Annual Men's Gathering, Leadership Programmes and The Good Enough Parent Support Programme



## Looking ahead

As we mark 25 years of important work, the journey is far from over. Whilst we have made significant strides in challenging societal norms, promoting men's health & wellbeing, and engaging men as allies for gender equality and ending Gender-Based Violence, we realise there is still much to be done. The organisation continues to evolve and adapt to the changing needs of men in a rapidly transforming world.



# of Empowering Men

Going forward the Men's Development Network aims to further expand our reach, working collaboratively with partner organisations, community organisations and government bodies to create a more expansive support network, and develop the good work that was started in the early days of South East Men's Network.

As we commemorate this milestone, we acknowledge the progress made and the challenges that lie ahead. The Men's Development Network serves as a beacon of hope, a reminder that true equality can only be achieved when all voices are heard, and all struggles are acknowledged. Here's to 25 years of inspiring change and many more to come.

## Opening of Equality House

Marking its 25th anniversary, Men's Development Network (MDN) formally opened its refurbished headquarters at 49-50 O'Connell Street, Waterford City, on Friday, 9th September 2022.

The building – named 'Equality House' – was opened by the Minister of State at the Department of Health, Mary Butler TD. The property was purchased in 2020 and extensively renovated to provide ample space for programme staff and privacy for clinical services. The event was held outdoors on O'Connell Street, with a road closure provided by Waterford City & County Council, adding to the festivities.



Clockwise:  
Minister of State at the Department of Health, Mary Butler TD reveals 'Equality House' plaque.  
[L-R] MDN CEO Seán Cooke, Mary Butler TD and Chairperson Noel Synnott display 2021 Annual report.  
Head of Programmes and Advocacy Colm Kelly Ryan, speaking at the opening of Equality House  
MDN CEO Seán Cooke with the LEAF Tribute Tree.

Those who attended the unveiling included local dignitaries, funders, partners, and other NGOs and service providers from around the region and nationally.

Reflecting the origins and growth of the organisation, the occasion also served to acknowledge notable contributions to MDN's 25 years of transformative work with men, boys, and families.

Several LEAF (Leadership, Equality, Advocacy and Friendship) acknowledgements were presented, with the recipients' names added to a ceremonial 'Tribute Tree,' symbolising growth and connection.

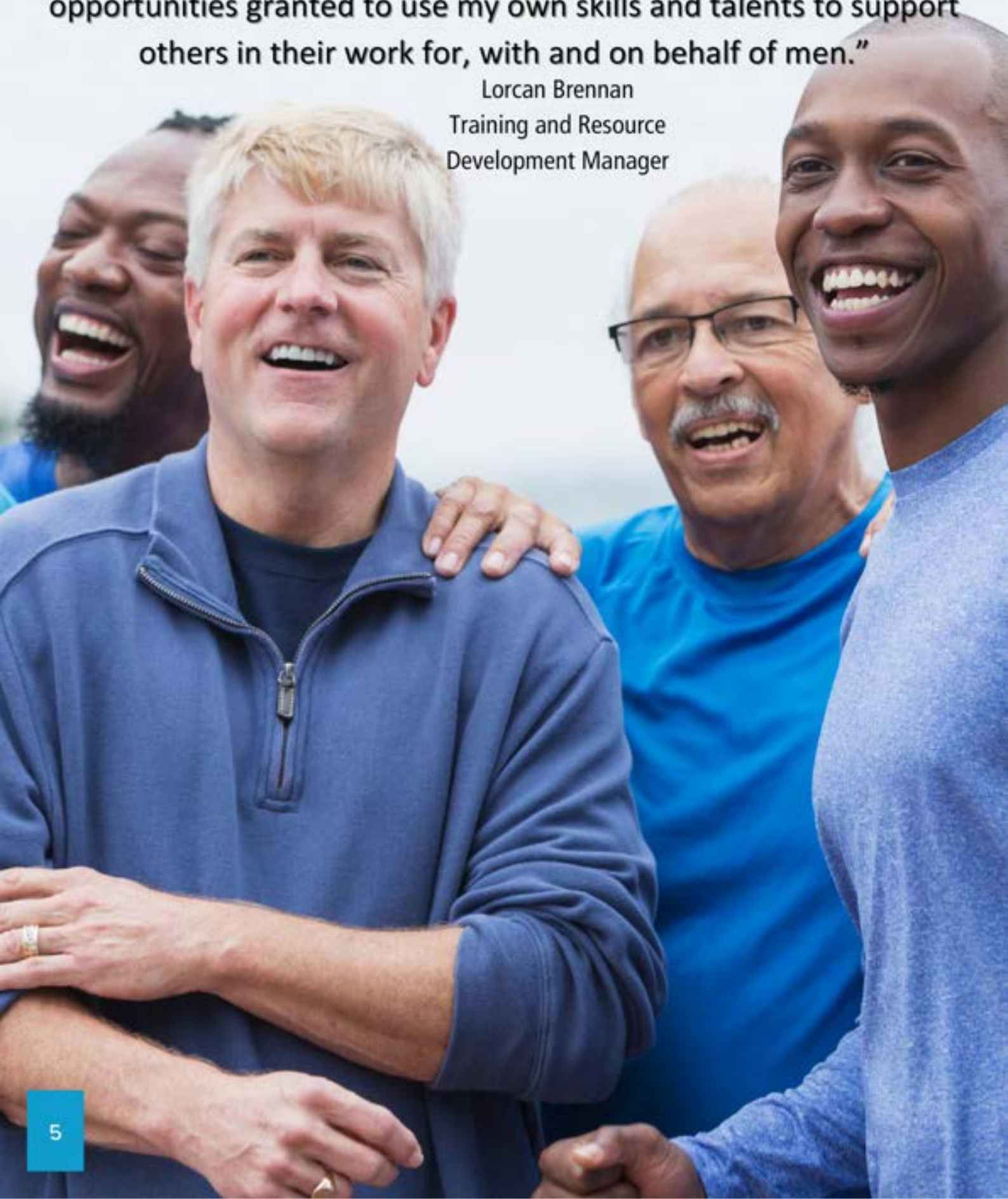
The LEAF honourees were:

- Liam Bolger (Founding MDN Member)
- Chantal McCabe (Philanthropist)
- Fran O'Grady (HSE)
- Alan O'Neill (Former MDN CEO)
- John O'Rourke (Former MDN Chair)
- Noel Whelan (Former MDN Board Member)



**“What I love most about working with MDN is the generosity of spirit shown by all colleagues and the freedom to learn through challenges in a way that is supportive to building confidence and strengthening practice for work in the field. I also love the many opportunities granted to use my own skills and talents to support others in their work for, with and on behalf of men.”**

**Lorcan Brennan**  
Training and Resource  
Development Manager



# Our Values



## **EQUALITY**

To strive towards a more equal society in which all people are treated equally and without discrimination, will create the conditions for everyone to thrive.



## **NON-JUDGEMENTAL**

Coming from this perspective allows for tolerance, respect, and dignity to influence the conditions for change.



## **PROFESSIONALISM**

A professional approach ensures both clients and partners are treated with respect and dignity and all areas of compliance are met.



## **PARTNERSHIP**

Working in collaboration and having a non-adversarial approach to effecting change creates the conditions for true and sustainable change.



## **LOVE**

Is the cornerstone of our existence; without it the conditions for personal and societal growth are limited.



# Strategic Objectives

## **Creating more spaces for new conversations with men**

Our approach to engaging men has been developed over almost 25 years. A developmental approach, it takes men where they are at and provides a supportive space to reflect, identify their needs and provide actions to move forward. It also acknowledges that the existing societal structures provide huge challenges for men to become their best selves. We will try to expand this work at a local, regional, and national level.

## **Increasing supports to men, women, and families**

We will continue to develop programmes that support and increase the capacity of men, women, and their families to engage in positive steps to improve their own lives and those of their families. We will try our best to expand our clinical services to ensure men and their families have access to services such as counselling, the Male Advice Line, and behavioural change programmes.

## **Influencing the policy, practice, and processes of engaging men**

Working within the existing networks, we will continue to promote our methodology of engaging men and highlighting the social conditioning contexts that contribute to inequality. As part of this promotion, we will develop training and resources that improve practices for service providers. Under this objective, we will improve our communications infrastructure internally and externally, taking advantage of online and social media platforms and CRM technologies.

## **Advocating for social change and greater gender equality**

There are many factors that influence the creation of an unequal society, including policy formation, social and gender conditioning, and social determinants. Through our campaigning work, we will continue to support and lead on projects to address these inequalities in partnership with other national agencies.



**Men's  
Development  
Network**



# Our Staff

As of End of December 2022\*



**SEÁN COOKE**  
Chief Executive Officer



**JOHN DOYLE**  
Director of Services  
(Client Support)



**LORCAN BRENNAN**  
Training & Resource  
Development Manager



**COLM KELLY RYAN**  
Head of Programmes &  
Advocacy



**MICHAEL DELANEY  
HENNESSY**  
Area Programme  
Coordinator MEND



**Marie Horgan**  
Area Programme Coordinator  
MEND



**MAIRTÍN DOHENY\***  
Area Programme  
Coordinator MEND



**DEBORAH CORCORAN**  
Financial Administrator



**JAMIE O'KEEFFE**  
Communications & Web  
Management Officer



**Dr Kenny Doyle**  
Project Dev. Officer: Research,  
Policy & Advocacy



**DEREK SMITH**  
Male Advice Line &  
Counselling Supervisor



**JOHN KILGARRIFF**  
Counsellor with Male Advice  
Line, Counselling



**JOSEPH ENGLISH**  
Project Administrator



**CLARE THOMA**  
FarmConnect (EIP-AGRI)  
Programme Coordinator



**Joyce O'Sullivan**  
Client Support Worker



**Fredrick Okungu\***  
Client Support Worker



**GAVIN WINTERS**  
Health & Development  
Programme Intern



**MARGARET DEVEREUX**  
Accounts Assistant

\*Mairtin Doheny and Fredrick Okungu departed during 2022.

\*Laurence Foskin and Michael Morrissey joined on CE and Tús schemes in 2022.



# Health & Development

## Engaging

## Empowering

2022 was a productive time for the Health and Development (H&D) team at Men's Development Network (MDN) after the two branches merged in 2021, the new H&D department has evolved into a fundamental branch of MDN. Through its various programmes and projects, the Health and Development department plays a fundamental role in ensuring the strategic objectives of the organisation are reached.

The H&D department works closely with government agencies, educational institutions, and service providers to influence the policy, practices, and processes of engaging men in addition to supporting men directly. Through its array of programmes, the H&D department advocates for social change, and greater gender equality whilst focusing on encouraging men and boys to be their most authentic selves. This is done by supporting primarily men through a variety of approaches including educational campaigns, training seminars, parent support programmes, research, development, advocacy, activism and national campaigns. The ensuing programmes fall under the Health and Development remit.



### Engage National Men's Health Training



### National Training Event, April 2022

Engage Training Programme: On Feirm Ground (OFG) continued to rollout throughout 2022 as the eighth unit of the Engage National Men's Health Training Programme. OFG is a bespoke farmers' health training programme that, through a Training of Trainers model, equips frontline agricultural advisors with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to engage and signpost farmers on health issues, and to mainstream a health promotion and prevention focus into farming practices and farm discussion groups. The training programme is jointly funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food & Marine, the Department of Health, the Health Service Executive, Southeast Technological University and through a Teagasc Walsh Fellowship. By the end of December 2022, Men's Development Network as Coordinators of Engage organised 33 OFG training events, with 360 registrations in total, demonstrating the significant interest and success of the programme in promoting good health and wellbeing and best practices for engaging men within the agricultural community. The project will be completed in Quarter 1 of 2023.

A significant further development within Engage during 2022 was the consolidation and reconfiguration of the Engage Units 1-7 into a 'generic' one-day Engage programme called 'Connecting with Men'. The new programme is scheduled to rollout in 2023 with HSE staff nationwide.





## Launch of White Ribbon Secondary School Programme

In line with the interdepartmental 'Zero Tolerance' Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, there is significant emphasis on engaging men and boys as allies for gender equality and in ending Gender-Based Violence. On November 25th, 2022, Men's Development Network launched the Department of Justice funded White Ribbon Secondary School Programme at Carmichael House, Brunswick Street, Dublin. Presentations were made by the White Ribbon Project Team, Department of Justice and Munster Technological University. A panel discussion was also held involving representatives of Dublin Rape Crisis Centre, DCU Anti-Bullying Centre, members of the teaching profession and the GAA on the role of schools in engaging boys in violence prevention. Representatives from 15 secondary schools attended on the day for information about the upcoming pilot programme in 2023. Handmade White Ribbons were provided on the day by the women from the Clonliffe & Croke Park Community Centre, who support the principles of White Ribbon in engaging men and boy to end men's Gender-Based Violence.



Róisín Clancy-Davies, White Ribbon Ireland and panel discussion moderator



Colm Kelly Ryan Head of Programmes & Advocacy at MDN.



Antoinette Doran, Department of Justice

## THE Good Enough Parent Support Programme



### The Good Enough Parent

The Good Enough Parent Support Programme is funded through the HSE National Lottery Funding and is open to parents of children between the ages of 9-17 years old. The Programme follows a strengths-based approach to support parents in the good work that they are already doing and supports positive health and wellbeing within the context of family life. The Programme also provides an opportunity for parents to reflect on their experiences and engage in supportive and new conversations with and amongst each other.

Alongside the participating parents and their families, the wider community also benefits from this programme as participants share and employ the knowledge, understanding, and skills that they develop through the programme to support their health, wellbeing, and development in their daily lives.



# The Good Enough Parent

The main concepts focused on in the programme include:

- Families and values
- Communication skills
- Behaviours and how we communicate
- Teenagers and the developmental process
- Self-esteem: Building resilience
- Feelings: Reaction to Responding
- Understanding Conflict
- Supporting positive and healthy relationships within family life and fatherhood/parenthood are core elements of transforming masculinities work in the context of the Health and Development Programme through providing facilitated interventions and conversations focused on living healthy and well in the context of family life.



Core activities through 2022 included:

- Continued rollout of the programme to parent support groups.
- Professional shooting of video resources and roleplays for online delivery and training of future facilitators
- Advertising and promotion of the brand-new programme to core health and wellbeing service providers, including: HSE contacts, HSE social prescribing services, HSE CAMHS, Túsla contacts, family resource centres, Home, School, Community Liaison Officers, CYPSCs, among other civil society groups.
- Design, development, and delivery of new Facilitator Training Programme – delivering the training to 6 new facilitators.
- Ongoing support and supervision for facilitators.
- Ongoing evaluation of programme groups.
- Delivery of final group under HSE National Lottery Funding (November-December 2022).
- Examining new streams of funding for continued delivery and sustainability of programme upon completion of HSE National Lottery Funding programmes.

## Farm Connect

**FarmConnect:** FarmConnect is a European Innovation Partnership project, co-funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. This innovative pilot project was launched in September 2022 by Minister Martin Heydon TD at Cooney's Yard, Co. Waterford.

This innovative pilot programme aims to support farmers in addressing health and wellbeing issues which can severely impact individual farmers and overall farm safety. The Health & Development Team, Men's Development Network's methodologies for engaging men and resources from On Feirm Ground and Engage informed the design, development, and delivery of this programme.



Members of the FarmConnect Project Team and Operational Group with Minister Martin Heydon TD at the launch of the FarmConnect Programme - September 2022.



## Farm Connect

### In 2022, key FarmConnect activities included:

- The design and development of the Programme content, with MDN's methodologies at the heart of the wellness model of engagement with farmers.
- Recruitment of a panel of facilitators for delivery in the Roscommon and Waterford regions.
- Training of facilitators through online training sessions, regional experiential facilitation training and 2-day national programme training in County Carlow in September.
- Bi-monthly Operational Group oversight meetings and reporting.
- Promotion, website development, registration creation and advertising of FarmConnect programme to participants.
- 1st round of delivery in Roscommon and Waterford, with 2 groups of farmers in each county partaking in the 6-week programme: 64 farmers graduated from the programme by the end of December, with a further 64 partaking in the programme in Quarter 1 of 2023.

**FarmConnect**  
Starting Monday 19th Sept

Calling Farmers in  
**ROSCOMMON**

**New Farmer Health and Wellbeing Programme**

- Work-Life Balance
- Healthy Habits
- Safer Practices
- Less Stress

**SIGN UP NOW!**  
[farmconnect.ie](http://farmconnect.ie)

**FREE**

Logos at the bottom: Men's Development Network, eip-agri, and European Union.

## Walking The Talk

- Walking the Talk: The Walking the Talk programme did not proceed in 2022 due to an absence of resources to deliver the programme following on from the successful pilot initiative in Kilkenny. It was agreed between the partners that Get Ireland Walking would investigate potential funding opportunities for the project while Men's Development Network would raise visibility about the success of the programme from a men's health and wellbeing perspective. Other initiatives to promote the project have included showcasing the project on National Walking Day 2022 and the European Week of Sport. The men who were part of the pilot programme continue to walk and talk, demonstrating the sustainability and success of the programme in promoting men's health, wellbeing and connection.



**Men's Development Network**

Better Lives for Men, Better Lives for All

A NEW PROGRAMME  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



**WALKING THE TALK**

"The idea was to encourage men – aided by the calming effect of nature – to actively reflect on the positive contributions they make to their families, friends, and communities."

Logos at the top: Men's Development Network, GET IRELAND WALKING, and KRSP.

Promotional poster for Walking The Talk. Designed in-house at MDN



# Man Survey

The Men's Attitudes Now (MAN) Survey was carried out between May and October and subsequently launched on Friday the 18th of November to coincide with International Men's Day. The Research aimed to better understand men's concepts of masculinity and gender. It sought to gather insights into how men feel about themselves and their role in society in relation to topics which included their wellbeing, their health, their attitudes about relationships and their reflections on social topics. There were 577 men who completed the survey, and the data was used as a basis for two reports.

The first MAN survey interim report was launched at a session in the New Conversations webinar in July 2022. This report compared men's personal opinions and beliefs against those that they believed were expected of them by others and by wider society in general.



A stark finding from this report which gained national media coverage was that one in five participants reported using pornography at least once a day. In response to the publication of this finding Minister for Justice Helen McEntee was quoted in national media saying "Men and boys can become agents of change by challenging discrimination, sexism and violence and I welcome the tireless work that Men's Development Network does in this area..."

The second and final report of the MAN survey was launched at a HSE-hosted webinar which included an address from CEO of Equimundo Gary Barker and former New Zealand rugby international Brett Pope. This event also included a panel discussion with authors Dr Kenny Doyle and Conor Hammersley, alongside Dr Caroline Munyi of AkiDWA, Carmel Donnelly from the Probation Service, and Dr Paula Carroll, South East Technological University.

The second report used the concept of the Man Box to assess the extent to which particular forms of masculinity are adhered to in Ireland. Overall we found that those who adhered to Man Box values were more likely to express lower levels of satisfaction that they could be themselves, and that they were more likely to exhibit risky behaviours around drinking and drug taking.

A "real man" is someone who does cry  
who does go to his friends for help  
who is vulnerable with his partner  
who doesn't resort to violence  
who appreciates equality  
who is not homophobic  
who is not racist

It's all about changing from within,  
listening, and compassion.

**BRENT POPE**  
MAN SURVEY LAUNCH 18.11.22

**INTERNATIONAL MENS DAY**  
November 19

#IMD2022 #MANsurvey

In-house promotional material created ahead of the Man Survey Launch, featuring a quote from key note speaker Brent Pope



Scan the QR code read the final report.



“In my first year with MDN I have been lucky to be involved in numerous worthy and interesting projects and collaborations which have contributed to our understanding of what it means to be a man in contemporary Ireland. I look forward to continuing this work in 2023.”

Dr. Kenny Doyle  
Project Dev. Officer: Research,  
Policy & Advocacy



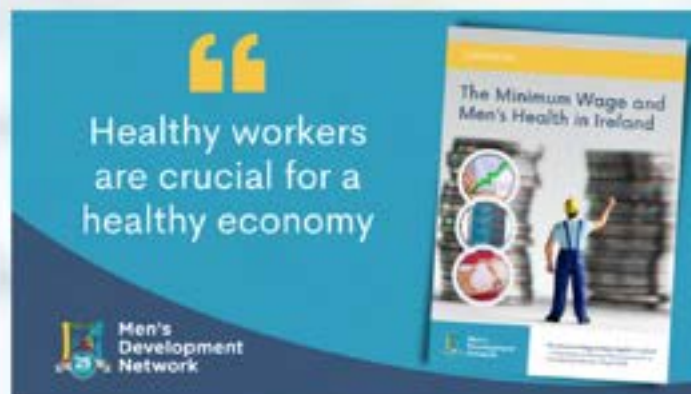


# General Advocacy & Campaigns

2022 saw significant engagement by Men's Development Network and White Ribbon Ireland in informing national policies from a transforming masculinities perspective.

Policy submissions made included the following:

- Submission to the policy consultation on the draft Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.
- Review of Part IV Criminal Justice (Sexual Offences) Act, 2017.
- Submission to Department of Justice Open Consultation on Parental Alienation.
- Submission to the Low Pay Commission on the National Minimum Wage and Men's Health in Ireland.
- Submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality.
- Review of the National Men's Health Action Plan HI-M 2017-2021.
- Submission to Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment on Ratification of ILO Convention No. 190.
- Dignity & Equality Workplace – Defence Forces Independent Review







Seán Cooke, Colm Kelly Ryan and Dr Kenny Doyle attend the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality



Staff of MDN attended the first day of the Irish National Integration Conference 2022, organised by the Immigrant Council of Ireland

**Annual Men's Gathering:** Following the Covid-19 pandemic, Men's Development Network returned to hosting our Annual Men's Gathering in-person. The Annual Men's Gathering took place from October 24th-26th 2022 at Ballyvaloo Retreat and Conference Centre, Co. Wexford, based around the theme: "Nurturing Your Wellbeing – 25 Years of Conversations, Connections and Circles with Men". At this year's 3-day Gathering, 25 men from across Ireland attended, providing spaces for reflection and modelling of MDN's methodologies for engaging with men and for personal development.



## 2022 Key Health & Development Events:

- Freedom from Fear launch
- Shared Ireland Dialogue Series
- Irish Integration Conference
- IHREC Gender Equality Conference – Sharing Caring Panel Discussion
- Hosting of 4 HSE webinars on Masculinities and men's health
- International Men's Health Week
- Appearance at Joint Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality
- Speakers at National Women's Council of Ireland FemFest

[Left] Promotional poster for HSE webinar on Masculinities and men's health hosted by MDN staff



25th Annual Men's Gathering at Ballyvaloo Retreat and Conference Centre, Blackwater, County Wexford October 24-26th, 2022



Men's Development Network CEO Seán Cooke and Head of Programmes & Advocacy Colm Kelly Ryan attended the launch of Rethink Ireland's Freedom From Fear Fund. The fund — which is a partnership between Rethink Ireland and the National Women's Council of Ireland — aims to channel money into supportive and preventative initiatives targeting an end to Gender-Based Violence.

Speaking at the event, Seán said that as a gender equality organisation marking 25 years' working with men and boys, Men's Development Network is committed to building solidarity and allyship with women to create a safer society for all, and in encouraging Irish males to become a positive force for change.

The Freedom From Fear launch featured among the Irish Times 'Images of the Day' on 22-2-22.

Photograph: Alan Betson



# Client Support Services

## Listening Reconciling

Providing essential guidance, our Client Support Services (CSS) department is a central component of the Men's Development Network. Composed of three vital programmes, MAL, MEND and Counselling, our CSS supports men, women, and families through listening, advising, intervention, engaging, supporting, and behavioural change programmes, whilst upholding the highest standards of respect and confidentiality.



## Male Advice Line

# 1800 816 588

MAL is the national Male Advice Line for male victims of domestic violence and abuse. MAL offers confidential phonenumber (1800 816 588) advice and support during specific hours, seven days a week, 365 days a year. A freephone service, MAL has been heralded as a 'Lifeline' by its users.

The core objective of MAL is to ensure that men are safe and that they can talk through what is happening to them without fear, shame, or blame. This freephone service is also available to family and friends who may have concerns for a loved one and are seeking some guidance on how to help them.



The MAL is a confidential and judgement-free space, with an experienced trained team.

MAL callers range from young men in their 20s to men over 70, we have callers from heterosexual and same-sex relationships. Not all callers are experiencing violence or abuse from their intimate partners, we have also had callers phoning about their experiences at the hands of other family members. Whether the abuse is physical, psychological, sexual, financial, neglect or discriminatory the MAL is ready to listen and offer confidential support and advice.



Radio interviews were integral to spreading the word of the Male Advice Line (MAL).

2022 saw MAL participate in a number of radio interviews on both national and local stations. These interviews highlighted the MAL service and encouraged men as well as concerned family members to get in contact for support.

One particular interview during the summer with KCLR radio directly led to a concerned relative writing down the MAL number and passing it on to a man who contacted the service 4 months later after returning from working overseas. The results of radio interviews are an integral part of promoting and highlighting the MAL service.



# Client Support Workers For the Male Advice Line

In the spring of 2022, the Men's Development Network's Male Advice Line (MAL) expanded its services and staff to deliver improved supports and outcomes for men experiencing domestic abuse.

As part of a Tusla-funded pilot initiative, Client Support Workers (CSW's) for the Southwest and Dublin comprise MDN's Client Support team. Responding to referrals from the Male Advice Line and other services, their role is to provide practical on-the-ground assistance, building resilience and capacity among the men they engage with.



CSW's respond to referrals from the Male Advice Line and other services

From the inception of the Client Support Worker role in March 2022 the region have supported numerous clients. From the support services rendered, court applications for protection/safety/barring orders, access to children, and legal signposting were the most requested.

## Inter-agency projects

The CSW's created links and networks with agencies/stakeholders that interact with male victims of Domestic Gender Based Violence (DGBV) within the areas of the Mid/Southwest and Dublin. A stakeholder mapping of the agencies was conducted and categorised as per the relevant services offered. The Agencies/organisations involved in this exercise included healthcare services, legal services, Men's Sheds, Macra na Feirme, Educational facilities and County Councils.

The response from the Gardai has been notably supportive, with collaboration from the Victims Office in Limerick. This collaboration has led to many referrals and phone calls seeking advice or signposting on behalf of male victims. An excellent working relationship has been established. CSW's have been included in the establishment of a new pilot scheme for victims in collaboration with An Garda Síochána (AGS) and TASK community care.

Family Resource Centres (FRC) have also been a source of many referrals. Our engagement with the FRCs has led to a wider networking opportunity as the CSP details were shared with all disciplines within the FRCs. This led to an enthusiastic promise of collaboration from a new pilot scheme within the FRCs in the region which provides therapeutic interventions and support within the remit of gambling in families. These support workers recognised the tendency of families who experienced gambling addiction to also have some form of abuse within the family dynamic.

Following a productive meeting with NorthStar family support project in Limerick, this service is working collaboratively with CSW's and have offered their space for CSW use. The CSW was also added to a list of local organisations that liaise strongly in the area, including a WhatsApp group and will receive all updates regarding networking and educational opportunities. This will provide for increasing contacts and therefore increasing referrals in the future.

In May 2022 MDN convened a meeting with Sonas to begin collaboration in emergency accommodation for male victims of domestic violence. From the meeting, Sonas affirmed its commitment to admitting male victims for a maximum period of six months after which they could be referred to the homeless service. For ease of operations, the MDN's CSW would be present on-site at any time for assessment and referral of clients.



CSW's provide practical on-the-ground assistance building resilience and capacity among the men they engage with.



Flyers designed in-house announcing new Client Support Workers. A selection of print and digital media was used to promote this new service for 2022.



Male Advice Line

1800 816 588





# MEND

Men Ending Domestic Abuse

MEND (Men Ending Domestic Abuse) is a programme administered through the Men's Development Network. Funded by the Department of Justice, MEND delivers the national Choices Programme to support men to end their violent or abusive behaviour and become non-violent and respectful within their intimate partner relationships.

The MEND Programme continued in early 2022 to operate within the context of the Covid-19 Crisis, with a key staff member on long-term sick leave and ultimately resigning from his post, other facilitators also on sick leave or taking up job offers and therefore not available for MEND work. Therefore, as we moved through 2022 the most significant achievement was that we were still able to maintain a safe and consistent service to our clients. To support the retention and training of Facilitators and Partner Support Workers we recruited a Facilitator Support and Training Development Officer at the end of 2022.



Maintaining a safe and consistent service to our clients during the Covid-19 crisis was of paramount importance.

The first phase of a three-phase Review of Domestic Violence Intervention Programmes nationally initiated by our funders the Department of Justice was completed early in 2022. This initial phase carried out by Working With Perpetrators European Network (WWPEN) comprised of a desktop review of Best Practice within the European context. The second phase will be looking at service provision in Ireland and will include interviews and focus groups with workers, managers, clients, and key stakeholders involved in the delivery of DVIPs in Ireland. Our experience during the Covid-19 crisis and beyond suggests that we may need to change our service delivery model to increase the retention of our facilitators and partner support workers but also to ensure optimal service provision to our clients. The Review will give us an ideal opportunity to reflect on what is required and communicate it to the Department of Justice.

In 2022 the new National Strategy on Domestic Sexual and Gender Based Violence (DSGBV) was launched. The overall objective of the Strategy is to create a society where there is Zero Tolerance towards Domestic Sexual and Gender-based Violence. While Perpetrator Programmes, including the Men's Development Network's MEND Programme, had been included and funded through the last 2 National Strategies, the 3rd National Strategy saw an increased focus in 3.6.2. on encouraging participation of perpetrators in perpetrator programmes by removing barriers to participation, further inclusion (3.6.3.) of the voice of the adult and child victims/survivors in the work of perpetrator programmes and of most significance for us as an organisation in 3.6.5. the Department will continue to resource the work with male perpetrators giving additional funding to ensure that these programmes are available throughout the State by 2023 for all who need them. Also, in 3.6.5 the Department, with the support of the Probation Service, will examine the potential establishment of a new National Perpetrator Programme Office. All this augurs well for the on-going development and delivery of Programmes to men who have been abusive within their intimate relationships with integrated Partner Support Services.



Posters designed in-house for a social media campaign to increase the awareness of MEND



Zero Tolerance towards Domestic Sexual and Gender-based Violence was launched in 2022, as part of the new National Strategy on DSGBV





**Men's  
Development  
Network**



A key event in 2022, co-hosted by the Mens Development Network and Move Ireland was the "Working With Perpetrators" European Network's Annual Conference, held in August at Dublin City University. The theme of the Conference was: "From Harm to Hope – Youth Interventions against Domestic Abuse," We had 116 people in attendance from 25 different countries. Key elements were also streamed online and 69 joined on Day 1 and 51 on Day 2.



Scan the QR code to see videos, photographs and to read more on this key event, including the final report.



The MEND team were delighted to support the marking of the Mens Development Network's 25 years in existence. Two conversations were videoed completed for MDN@25: A conversation with Owen O'Neill and a Conversation with contract workers on the Mend Programme.

In addition, two people closely associated with MDN Mend Paul Wolf Light (Ahimsa UK) and Alessandra Pauncz, Director of Working With Perpetrators European Network (WWP EN) presented workshops on the MDN@25 Symposium.



Promotional poster for event hosted by DRCC and the Wheel, featuring MDN's Lorcán Brennan and John Doyle.



The MEND team and other MDN staff at the WWP EN 2022 annual conference.

“Interagency work continues to be a core part of the work of the Mend Team and again in 2022 we engaged with local area forms on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, attended conferences and seminars organised by interagency networks and consistently promoted the work of MDN and specifically the work of Mend to key referral agencies in our programme areas.”

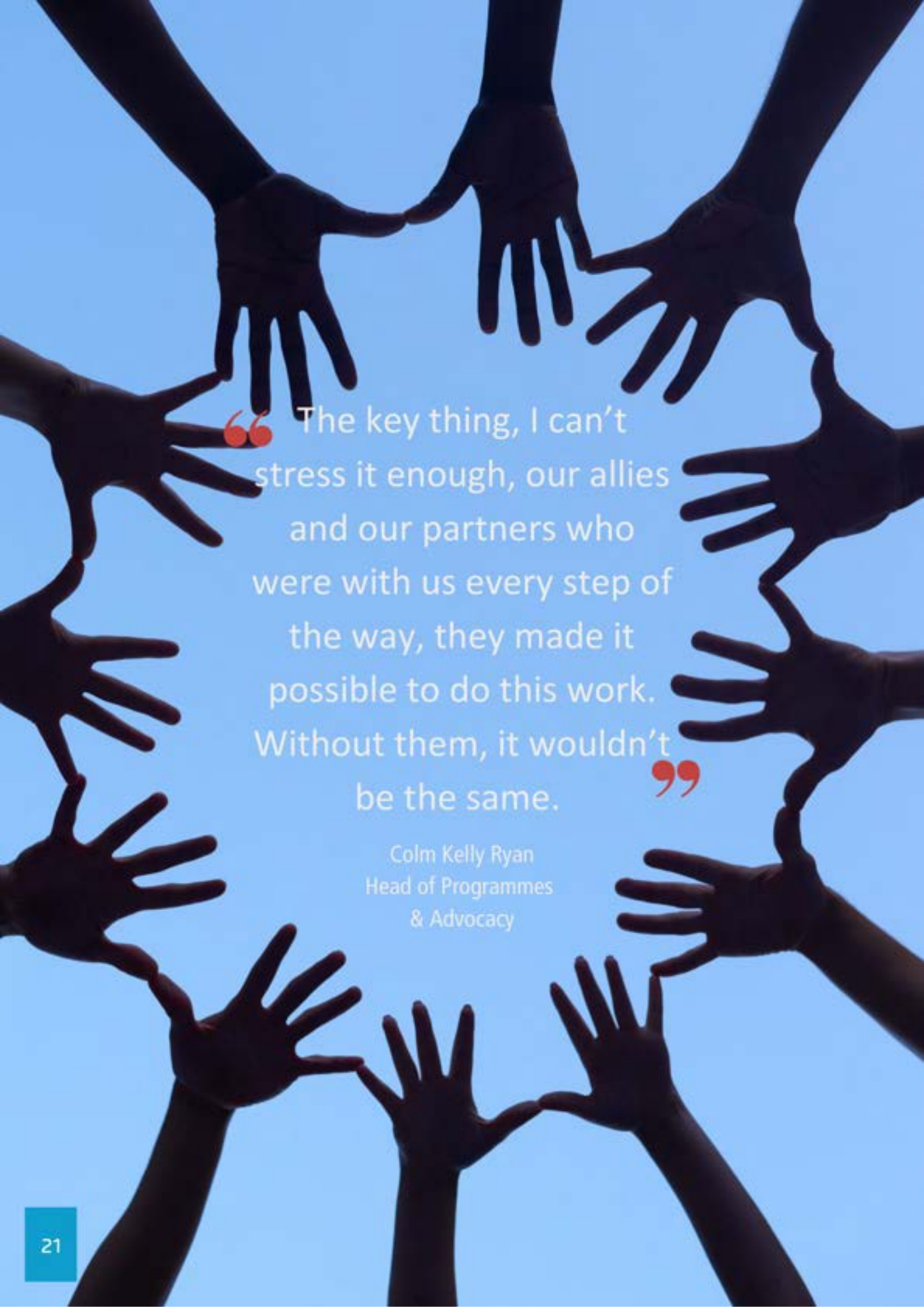
JOHN DOYLE  
-DIRECTOR OF SERVICES (CLIENT SUPPORTS)

# MEND key Events 2022

As we emerged from Covid-19 MEND were eager to return to live events. In 2022 MEND hosted and took part in several pivotal events

- The Men's Development Network and Move Ireland were the hosts for the Working With Perpetrators European Network's Annual Conference, held in August at Dublin City University.
- Two conversations were video recorded for MDN@25: A conversation with Owen O'Neill retiring CEO of Move Ireland with a focus on Working in Partnership and a Conversation with contract workers on the Mend Programme who have been there from the beginning.
- The 3rd delivery of our Level 8 Special Purposes Award training for Facilitation of Domestic Violence Intervention Programmes in partnership with SETU Carlow.
- In October we co-hosted our Annual Training Conference held in the Hodson Bay Hotel and attended by colleagues from Move Ireland.
- We participated in a very successful and worthwhile Training Network, funded by the Wheel and coordinated by Dublin Rape Crisis Centre where we identified training primarily focused on the area of sexual violence that we made available to staff and volunteers during the year. We had very positive feedback from the training provided.





“ The key thing, I can’t stress it enough, our allies and our partners who were with us every step of the way, they made it possible to do this work. Without them, it wouldn’t be the same. ”

Colm Kelly Ryan  
Head of Programmes  
& Advocacy



# Company Details

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>Name</b>         | Men's Development Network CLG                                |
| <b>Chairperson</b>  | Noel Synnott   |
| <b>Secretary</b>    | Joan Bolger (*Departed position Sept '22)                    |
| <b>Treasurer</b>    | Owen Hillery   |
| <b>Directors</b>    | Mia De Faoite  |
|                     | Frank Hutchinson   |
|                     | Gary White   |
|                     | John Brophy  |
|                     | Rose Hearne (*Became Secretary Sept '22)                     |
|                     | Natalie Garland-Cooke (*Joined MDN board Apr '22)            |
|                     | Dr Caroline Munyi (*Joined MDN board Nov '22)                |
| <b>Auditors</b>     | MK Brazil, Waterford   |
| <b>Bankers</b>      | AIB Merchants Quay, Waterford                                |
| <b>Solicitors</b>   | HD Keane Solicitors, Waterford                               |
| <b>Reg Address</b>  | Equality House 49/50 O'Connell Street,<br>Waterford, X91E866 |
| <b>Phone</b>        | 051-844260/1   |
| <b>Email</b>        | men@mensnetwork.ie   |
| <b>Website</b>      | www.mensnetwork.ie   |
| <b>Social Media</b> | @MensNetworkIE   |

www.mensnetwork.ie



We confirm that Men's Development Network complies with The Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charitable Sector of Ireland. Men's Development Network is a Company Limited by Guarantee. CRO No.: 307175; CHY No.: 13634; Registered Charity No.: 20042974.



# Financial Information

## Income & Expenditure 2022

|                                 | 2022             | 2021           |
|---------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Income</b>                   | <b>€</b>         | <b>€</b>       |
| HSE                             | 153,000          | 183,220        |
| Dept of Justice                 | 517,057          | 446,156        |
| TUSLA                           | 234,865          | 257,080        |
| Program Income Deferred         | -5,494           | (50,298)       |
| Donations                       | 31,500           | 31,607         |
| Waterford Co. Co.               | -                | 8,136          |
| Dept of Health                  | 19,000           | 10,571         |
| Dept of Agri, Food & The Marine | 159,285          | 59,893         |
| Other Income                    | 21,214           | 19,273         |
|                                 | <u>1,130,427</u> | <u>965,638</u> |

### Expenditure

|                                    |                  |                |
|------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Wages and salaries                 | 523,002          | 429,864        |
| Social welfare costs               | 55,927           | 46,150         |
| Staff defined contribution pension | 1,233            | -              |
| Costs Staff training               | 3,144            | 5,615          |
| Rent payable                       | -12,874          | 30,109         |
| Insurance                          | 7,893            | 8,370          |
| Light and heat                     | 7,303            | 4,337          |
| Facilitation / supervision         | 397,634          | 281,428        |
| Repairs and maintenance            | 15,013           | 13,090         |
| Printing, postage and stationery   | 17,987           | 25,356         |
| Advertising                        | 21,916           | 5,130          |
| Telephone                          | 22,781           | 25,795         |
| Computer costs                     | 22,733           | 13,006         |
| Travel expenses                    | 34,158           | 10,742         |
| Legal and professional             | 6,536            | -              |
| Bank charges                       | 1,100            | 915            |
| General expenses                   | 5,057            | 5,085          |
| GDPR Costs                         | 4,317            | -              |
| Subscriptions/Membership fees      | 1,798            | 726            |
| Auditor's remuneration             | 5,371            | 5,360          |
| Depreciation                       | 8,175            | 8,095          |
| Charitable donations               | 50               | -              |
|                                    | <u>1,150,254</u> | <u>919,173</u> |

### Finance

|                       |          |        |
|-----------------------|----------|--------|
| Bank interest paid    | 12,852   | 8,176  |
| Net (deficit)/surplus | (32,679) | 38,289 |



## Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2022

|  | 2022<br>€ | 2021<br>€ |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| <b>Fixed Assets</b>  |           |           |
| Tangible assets  | 356,728   | 360,903   |
| <b>Current Assets</b>  |           |           |
| Debtors  | 410       | 67,135    |
| Cash and cash equivalents                                      | 230,597   | 234,415   |
|  | 231,007   | 301,550   |
| <b>Creditors:</b> amounts falling due after more than one year | (50,475)  | (85,234)  |
| Net Current Assets   | 180,532   | 216,316   |
| Total Assets less Current Liabilities                          | 537,260   | 577,219   |

### Creditors

|  |           |           |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Amounts falling due after more than one year | (424,767) | (432,047) |
|--|-----------|-----------|

|            |         |         |
|------------|---------|---------|
| Net Assets | 112,493 | 145,172 |
|------------|---------|---------|

### Reserves

|                  |         |         |
|------------------|---------|---------|
| Retained surplus | 112,493 | 145,172 |
|------------------|---------|---------|

|                |         |         |
|----------------|---------|---------|
| Members' Funds | 112,493 | 145,172 |
|----------------|---------|---------|



**Men's  
Development  
Network**



“When as men we embrace our roles as carers and promote it as a positive attribute of our masculinity, it is not only us who benefit from living our most flourishing lives. Our families and friends reap the rewards of us being our most authentic selves and being ever-present in supporting and caring for each other.”

Seán Cooke  
Chief Executive Officer





# Message From The CEO

This year, the CEO message is placed at the end of the report to acknowledge all the great work that took place throughout 2022 and looking ahead to a new year that will build on the solid foundations of the past 25 years.

Our anniversary year allowed us to reflect on the structural partnerships built across an array of programmes, services, and advocacy initiatives. These partnerships are vital to all aspects of our work, including the areas of health and wellbeing, personal development, equality and violence prevention.

In 2023, a referendum is proposed to take place on instilling the value of care in the Constitution, removing outdated provisions on the role of women in Irish society and the definition of family. MDN are fully supportive of the recommendations of the Citizen's Assembly on Gender Equality and the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Gender Equality. We believe enshrining care as a core value within our constitution is a significant step towards equality. When we enhance the value of care, it acknowledges the importance of work in this area whether in childcare, hospital care or family care. When we collectively care, we create communities and societies that promote understanding, connection, and empathy.

When as men we embrace our roles as carers and promote it as a positive attribute of our masculinity, it is not only us who benefit from living our most flourishing lives. Our families and friends reap the rewards of us being our most authentic selves and being ever-present in supporting and caring for each other.

Organisationally, we believe through our experience of working in the area of violence prevention, care is the opposite of violence and promoting a caring environment and modelling caring actions amongst our younger citizens will create the conditions in which traditional stereotypes can be challenged and dismantled.

Although we do not have the specific language of the proposals to amend the Constitution, the intention is clear in ensuring our Constitution reflects our community/society. We as an organisation are encouraging men to take an active role in this referendum and to promote a more equal society that places caring at its centre.



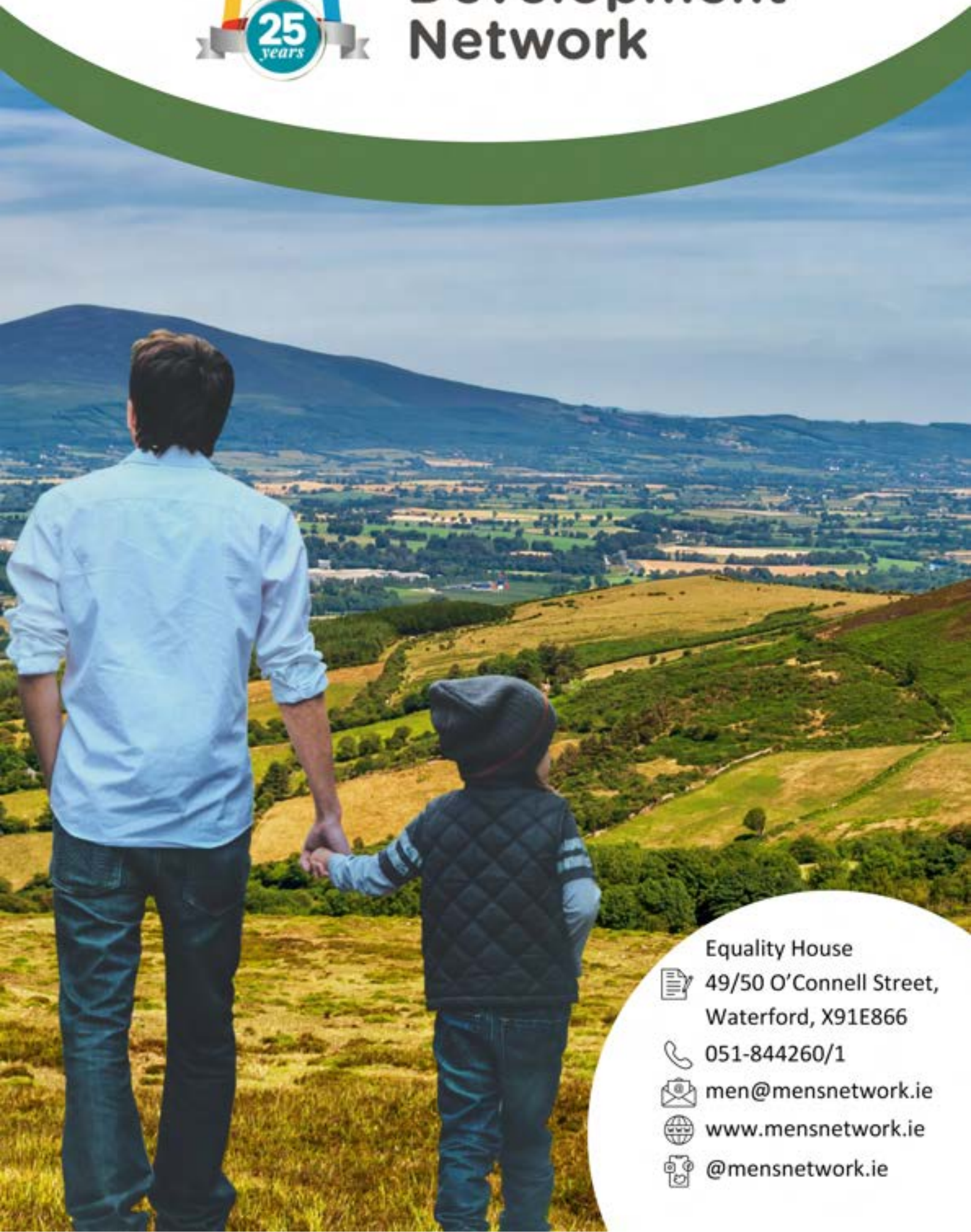
Seán Cooke  
Chief Executive Officer







# Men's Development Network



Equality House



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Waterford, X91E866



051-844260/1



men@mensnetwork.ie



www.mensnetwork.ie



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