Health and Wellbeing in the GAA

National Officer Development Seminar 2014

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Why should the GAA focus on Health and Wellbeing? 
Because it’s part of what we do!

Ten reasons to be active

1. depressed, anxious or tense
2. feel good about yourself
3. concentrate and focus better
4. sleep better
5. cope with trying to give up a habit e.g. smoking
6. to keep mobile and independent as you get older
7. less likely to have problems with memory and dementia
8. reduce harmful changes in the brain caused by stress.
9. more connected
10. Let off steam!
GAA Clubs by their very nature promote health

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Protective Factors</th>
<th>Risk Factors</th>
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<tr>
<td>Positive outlook</td>
<td>Early use of tobacco, alcohol and other substances</td>
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<td>Self confidence and positive self belief</td>
<td>Mental health problems</td>
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<td>Good communication skills</td>
<td>Aggression/impulsivity</td>
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<td>Appropriate Boundaries/supervision</td>
<td>Risk taking</td>
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<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>Easily influences by peers</td>
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<td>Strong sense of community</td>
<td>No sense of belonging to or pride in community</td>
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<td>Opportunities to socialize in a safe environment</td>
<td>Lack of facilities and amenities</td>
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GAA leads by example in this field

- ASAP programme
- Off the Booze & On the Ball
- GAA Social Initiative
- Dermot Earley Youth Leadership Initiative
- Mental Health projects at County level
- 2 national projects online in 2014
- Our player role models
- Our coaches/officers/volunteers
County Health & Wellbeing Committees are next step

<table>
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<tr>
<th>What they should do</th>
<th>What they shouldn’t do</th>
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<td>- Provide structure in responding to health related issues at county level</td>
<td>- Become a ‘counselling service’ for our members</td>
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<td>- Offer support and guidance to clubs on pertinent health and wellbeing issues</td>
<td>- Try to solve all societies ills – should focus on small number of achievable goals</td>
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<td>- Access broader knowledge base within GAA membership and beyond</td>
<td>- Partner with just anyone – it’s important all partners are reputable and/or accredited</td>
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<td>- Facilitate appropriate partnerships with relevant agencies in each county</td>
<td>- Roll out once off projects without a long-term plan</td>
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<td>- Link in with national programme</td>
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Our Aim

- The Health and Well Being Subgroup of Cumann Luthchleas Gael in Tir Eoghain will promote positive health and well being in our local clubs and communities. This committee will also advise local clubs of key agencies and organisation who are available for support and advice when required.

- The health and Well Being Subgroup agree to collaborate with youth and other subgroup of Cumann Luthchleas Gael Tir Eoghain where appropriate and where needs arise.

Areas of focus in 2103:

- Suicide Awareness
- Mental Health Support and Advice
- Alcohol and Substance Abuse
- Cardiac Response Training
- Obesity
- Road Safety
- Promotion of Positive Mental Health and Well Being Messages in Clubs
Counties doing so much already.....

...but this is also new territory for the Association in some way.
Counties will have to deal with issues regardless

- In 2013 GAA Community & Health Section assisted in almost 30 Critical Incidents
  - Tragic death of member
  - Death by suicide
  - SADS
  - Mental health concerns
  - Addiction issues
  - Drugs related incidents
Additional supports coming available in 2014

- New National Health & Wellbeing Committee
- Club Health & Wellbeing Officer (to replace ASAP officer)
- Samaritans to become mental health partner for GAA
  - Tackle stigma / signpost to 24-7/365 free-phone helpline
- Mental health packs to be provided to all clubs (developed in association with St. Patrick’s Hospital)
- Development of a Critical Incident Response Plan
- Access to safeTALK training provided by trained HSE/PHA personnel/accredited agencies
What to do at County level

- Formulate your County Health & Wellbeing Committees
- Maximum of 8 members, chair to be selected by County Chairperson
- Include some/all of the following: County ASAP Officer, Children’s Officer, Coaching Officer, Social Initiative Coordinator, Inclusion Officer, Rep from Youth Board, Club reps
- At least 2 people with relevant expertise/professional experience
- Should meet every 6-8 weeks

New Health & Wellbeing Committees should:
- Meet once before end of Feb
- Attend national training workshop in Croke Park before end of April
- Devise 1-2 year action plan for approval by County Executive
- Focus on 3 key areas in 2014:
  - Get all clubs to adopt ASAP policies
  - Organise, promote and host one session of safeTALK training
  - Focus on one relevant local issue
What to do if you are approached by someone who needs help

- Address the topic directly but allow them to do the talking
- Respect what they have to say if you want to retain their respect for you
- Don’t interrupt or be judgemental
- Discuss possible ways forward and/or consequences of doing nothing
- Encourage the player to remain in the game
- Support as far as possible but know your limitations
- Direct them to other services if appropriate

We all need help to overcome some of life’s obstacles!
SAOR Model

- Supports the Player/Member
  - Builds up trust
  - Helps person to open up & discuss problems

- Asks the Right Questions
  - Gets overall picture of the issues
  - Gets to the nub of the problem

- Offers Advice
  - Gives information
  - Clarifies issues for person

- Refers on (if necessary)
  - Gets help for person
  - Links them with the right supports
Go raibh míle maith agat