



The Men's Development Network's
**Traveller Men's
Development Programme**
for the Health Service Executive

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The Men's Development Network
30 O'Connell St., Waterford
tel: 051 844 260/1 fax: 051 855 264
email: men@mens-network.net
www.mens-network.net
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Introduction

“In the next decades, the medium and long-term strength of the economy will depend not only on investment in infrastructure and scientific research, but also on a deepening of capabilities across a wide spectrum, greater participation, an infrastructure of care that improves both the quality of life and the ability to participate, internal as well as external connectivity, social inclusion [and] more social mobility.”

(National Economic Social Council, 2008, xvii)

In 2006 HSE South commissioned The Men's Development Network to carry out a consultation process in the South East with Traveller men and Service Providers to the Travelling community. This was undertaken at a time when service providers saw a need to progress development work with Traveller men. Work had been undertaken for several years in many areas within the five counties of the South Eastern region, namely Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, South Tipperary and Carlow. The introduction of the interagency model¹ as a means of working together to enhance and more effectively target services to those communities who need them most has also been an instigator in driving the need for more effective methods and models of working with Traveller men in terms of development practice.

The Traveller Men's Health Regional Group for the South East initiated this consultation process and combines individuals from several agencies who also sit on county interagency groups. The agencies represented include:

- HSE South
- County Wexford Partnership
- Co Waterford Travellers Initiative
- Carlow County Council
- Kilkenny Community Action Network
- St. Catherine's SYYC Carlow
- The Men's Development Network

These individuals work in a range of positions delivering services to the Travelling Community including:

- Traveller Public Health Nurses
- Development workers
- Training Facilitators
- Men's Development Health Co-ordinator
- Traveller Health Regional Co-ordinator
- VEC Training Centre Manager
- Social Worker

The rationale to carry out a consultation on service provision to Traveller men was to understand Traveller men's needs in the South Eastern region and with this understanding progress and plan for effective development work into the future. While much development work has taken place over the years in the South East it has not made the gains hoped for in many areas. The consultation process was undertaken to document these issues by drawing the stakeholders' knowledge together in order to develop more effective and understanding work based on the needs of the Traveller men, their families and their extended communities.

Terms of Reference of the Consultation

Develop an approach to working with Traveller men that engages with them and supports their engagement in their community.

Assessing the needs will include estimating the requirements in terms of the population numbers and their location within the region.

Plot the ways forward based on an audit of needs that consults with Traveller men and those working with Traveller men.

- It will take account of the work that is being engaged in across the South East region – Counties Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford and Wexford.
- It will reflect the work done in the nine pilot programmes (TMHP-HSE) and any other experience of working with Traveller men in the region.
- The process will work with those engaging with Traveller men and build on their experience and insight.
- Examine ways of working with marginalised men in the Traveller and settled communities.

The consultation report² required a detailed examination of Traveller men's lives from their own perspective and the perspective of service providers who work directly with or have dealings with Traveller men. The report is divided into several sections and attempts to draw together current and past information and data on Traveller men and combines this with an extensive consultation process to give a picture of how life is for Traveller men today.

What has emerged from this consultation is that Traveller men's attitudes to engagement with services and programmes of development varies. These attitudes are impacted upon by several factors such

¹ Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (2006) Report of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues.

² The Men's Development Network (2008) Traveller Men: A Consultation with Traveller Men and Service Providers on Traveller Men's Needs. Waterford: The Men's Development Network

as accommodation, age, economic status and level of disenfranchisement from society in general, however Traveller men are not exclusively defined by these factors.

The consultation process was begun in 2007 and was painstaking in its process. This consultation process included 37 Traveller men. The discussions with Traveller men took place in various formats, from individual discussions in men's homes to larger focus group discussions in centres around the South Eastern region. The formats used were one-to-one interviews and focus groups. We have found these to be most effective for Traveller men within other types of research and consultations which have a focus on Traveller issues. The decision to speak to Traveller men wherever and whenever they wished, rather than at set times and places, facilitated their lives rather than the time frame of the consultation. In this regard the time taken to complete or exhaust the process was longer than initially thought.

Thirty six service providers took part in this consultation including Traveller Public Health Nurses, Visiting Teachers, Traveller Development workers, Project Co-ordinators, County Council Social Workers, a Volunteer involved with the Travelling Community for several decades, Tutors, Traveller Training Centre Managers, a Chaplain for the Travelling Community, a Psychotherapist, Spokesperson for Pavee Point and Pavee Point Health and Development workers, Caretakers and the Co-ordinator of the MDN's Men's Development Health Programme.

The Consultation was completed in March 2008. It provides detailed information on Traveller men's Health needs, as expressed by Traveller men themselves, and the associated issues identified by the relevant Service Providers.

The Programme which has been developed here is the result of the combination of two pieces of work; the regional Consultation of Traveller Men's Health Needs for the Health Service Executive (discussed above) and twelve years' men's development practice by the Men's Development Network.

In the Men's Development Network's (MDN) experience engaging with a man in order to encourage that man to engage in a development process, or even for him to recognize the opportunity on offer, or to consider that there is any need for development for him as a man, is a long shot.

In the MDN we reckon it's worth taking that shot and investing the time. In our experience two years is the average amount of time it takes for a man to start

noticing the benefit of the development process. Rather than offering courses, services, education or training at the beginning we find that it is better to leave these options until later.

In the first instance it is better to reach out to men and ask them what they want. Since this is the MDN's approach and Men's Health is central to our work we were delighted to be asked to do a Consultation of Traveller Men's Health Needs for the H.S.E.

The programme presented here therefore follows the approach which the Department of the Taoiseach has presented as the way forward:

*"An integrated approach to providing services and supports to Travellers will be developed in line with the recommendations of the Report of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues, taking account of the Second Progress Report of the Traveller Monitoring Committee. The Government and social partners agree to give concentrated attention to achieving progress on this approach, including opportunities for Travellers to participate in employment in the public, private and voluntary sectors and to support measures to improve communication between Travellers and the general population."*³

Further to this the National Economic and Social Council have stated on national core objectives that:

*"Innovation in public services and the wider not-for-profit sector can contribute directly to advancing core national objectives – such as improving the quality of human settlements and containing urban sprawl, promoting healthy living, protecting the environment, developing an age-friendly society, enhancing social cohesion and social inclusion."*⁴

Taking this a step further the council has informed the government that:

*"Innovation in public services, in particular, frequently entails deep changes within organisational cultures that are risk adverse and where accountability is significantly based on conformity in how inputs are used rather than on the outputs produced and their effectiveness in supporting the outcomes sought."*⁵

When considered from the perspective of the Travelling community, and Traveller men in particular, the NESC report above points to the need for more rapid progress on social inclusion measures:

"Those seeking to ensure social inclusion emphasise the need for more rapid progress in addressing early school leaving and educational underperformance among young people, the specific barriers facing

³ Department of the Taoiseach (2006) Towards 2016: Ten-year framework social partnership agreement 2006-2015, p.58 Dublin: Stationery Office

⁴ NESC (2008) The Irish Economy in the Early 21st Century. National Economic & Social Development Office, 170

⁵ *ibid*, 170

minorities, restricted literacy among adults and low levels of participation in life-long learning.”⁶

This Traveller Men’s Development Programme is a result of the combination of the requirements of Towards 2016⁷, and other relevant publications, the national core objectives, the consultation of the expressed needs of Traveller men, the detailed observations of the years of experience of the service providers and the Men’s Development Networks men’s development practice and methodology. This report includes all of these essential sources and is set out as follows:

- The National application of this combined approach is set out in Part 1 of this document.
- The Needs Analysis derived from the Consultation is detailed in Part 2. The tables within this section show the Traveller men’s, Service Providers and development workers perception of Traveller men’s needs and the issues associated with them.
- The Traveller Men’s Development Programme is described in Part 3. The context in which Traveller men’s development work can be done is outlined and the Government Policy, Frameworks and Plans that direct the work are noted.
- Part 4 is a comprehensive Bibliography.

The MDN has begun developing a Training Manual and Development Handbook to accompany this Programme.

Alan O’Neill **Nicholas Clarke** **Séamus Franklin**
Director *Researcher* *Project Manager*

The Men’s Development Network Limited
July 2008

Contents

Introduction	2
--------------	---

Part 1

National Application	5
-----------------------------	----------

Part 2

Needs Analysis	7
-----------------------	----------

Abbreviations	9
Tables:	
Mental Health	9
Physical Health	10
Accommodation.....	10
Horses	11
Education	11
Training	11
Traveller Men’s Development Programme	12
Employment	12
Agencies	12
Support.....	13
Young Traveller Men	13

Part 3

Traveller Men’s Development Programme	15
--	-----------

Context	16
Key Documents.....	16
Evidence Based Work	17
Traveller Men’s Development Programme	17
The Programme	18
Attitudes and Barriers	19
Inclusivity	20
Engagement	20
Benefits.....	20
A One Page Guide	21
Programme Implementation.....	22

Part 4

Bibliography	23
---------------------	-----------

⁶ *ibid*, 222

⁷ Department of the Taoiseach (2006) Towards 2016: Ten-year framework social partnership agreement 2006-2015, p.58 Dublin: Stationery Office



The Men's Development Network's Consultation of Traveller Men's Health Needs for the H.S.E.

Part 1 National Application

National Application

This model of identifying Traveller men's needs and the issues that are associated with them, with Traveller men and the Service Providers, and using this information to guide a Traveller Men's Development Programme could be applied nationally:

1. Undertake a Regional Consultation in each of the 4 Health Service Executive regions.
2. Prepare a Needs Analysis based on the needs identified by the Traveller men and the Service Providers.
3. Agree with each Traveller Interagency Group to run this Traveller Men's Development Programme supported by their commitment and informed by their experience.
4. Outreach to Traveller men and prepare a focused needs analysis with the Traveller men who actually engage.
5. Respond directly to these needs.
6. Work with the CDBs, Local Authorities, Statutory Agencies, Service Providers and N.G.O.s to build working relationships with Traveller men.
7. Work in partnership to achieve solutions.
8. Develop supportive allies in other communities; business, farming, motor industry, sport, health, the law and so on.
9. Build on the solutions to today's needs to start the process of solving tomorrow's.
10. Review the work and jointly learn with agencies what works and how it might be embedded in future policy and practice.
11. Allow for the amount of time it is going to take.

This approach fits the Government's requirement of:

"Concentrated attention"⁸

*"It would seem contradictory to think of people as worthy of rights and yet deny them a say in what their rights are and how they should be vindicated."*⁹

*"Complex social and economic problems require complex solutions, many of which can only be discovered in practice."*¹⁰

⁸ Department of the Taoiseach (2006) Towards 2016: Ten-year framework social partnership agreement 2006-2015, p.58. Dublin: Stationery Office

⁹ National Economic and Social Council (2003) An Investment in Quality: Services Inclusion and Enterprise, p.365 Dublin: National Economic and Social Council

¹⁰ *ibid.* p.368



The Men's Development Network's Consultation of Traveller Men's Health Needs for the H.S.E.

Part 2 Needs Analysis

Needs Analysis

This needs analysis is derived from the findings of the Men's Development Network's Consultation of Traveller Men's Needs in the South East, carried out on behalf of the Health Service Executive¹¹.

The findings from the Consultation match the experience of the MDN when working with men, including Traveller men. The needs and issues raised are compatible with the MDN's approach to its work and inform the Traveller Men's Development Programme described in part three. The issues associated with the work with Traveller men in the consultation come from Traveller men and service providers themselves and directly inform the work. For instance service providers stated the following:

"Ask men what they want and they will listen"

"Traveller men will engage if they feel you respect and value their life"

"We need to take a step back to understand their needs"

"Successful Travellers as role models"

"Traveller men tolerate you on a voluntary basis, you need to remember that"

The rationale to carry out a consultation on service provision to Traveller men was to understand the context within which Traveller men in the South Eastern region are living their lives; such an understanding would inform, focus and provide planning for progression and for effective development work with Traveller men into the future. While much development work has taken place in the South East there are still particular structural, personal and practical difficulties.

Traveller men are affected by marginalisation, disadvantage, poverty, unemployment and male gender conditioning. In 1986 the World Health Organisation set out the fundamental conditions and resources for health¹².

These include:

- Peace
- Shelter
- Education
- Food
- Income
- A stable eco-system
- Sustainable resources
- Social justice, and equity

Further to this the charter states:

*"Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health. To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs, and to change or cope with the environment. Health is, therefore, seen as a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Therefore, health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, but goes beyond healthy life-styles to well-being."*¹³

In order to create the environment where health can be improved, in terms of the conditions and resources for health, the charter indicates that this can be achieved by; "advocating" for health in relation to social, economic and personal development, "enabling" people to achieve their fullest health potential by reducing differences in current health status and ensuring equal opportunities and resources to all people, and by "mediating" the relationships between people and other sectors of society such as, governments, health and other social and economic sectors, non-governmental and voluntary organizations, local authorities, industry and the media. In this regard the charter states,

*"Professional and social groups and health personnel have a major responsibility to mediate between differing interests in society for the pursuit of health.... Health promotion strategies and programmes should be adapted to the local needs and possibilities of individual countries and regions to take into account differing social, cultural and economic systems."*¹⁴

Further to this The Task Force on the Travelling Community¹⁵ recommended that policy for health promotion and education for Travellers should aim to:

- Restore Traveller's confidence in their ability to distinguish and to cope with minor illnesses
- Be based around personal skills development in order to support Traveller's in appropriately meeting the many challenges in their lives and should not merely focus on lifestyle behaviour.

The following tables outline the needs identified through the Consultation. The Consultation informs the methodology outlined here and is designed to provide a more effective and understanding approach to development work with Traveller men which is informed directly by the needs of the Traveller men, their families and their extended communities.

¹¹ The Men's Development Network (2008) Traveller Men: A Consultation with Traveller Men and Service Providers on Traveller Men's Needs. Waterford: The Men's Development Network

¹² http://www.who.int/hpr/NPH/docs/ottawa_charter_hp.pdf

¹³ Ibid. (emphasis mine)

Tables

The tables outline the needs, actions and outcomes that have come from the Consultation and are set out in a way which takes into account the Ottawa Charter and the social determinants of health. Presenting the needs, actions and outcomes in this way will allow for the focus to be placed on those determinants when operating the Traveller Men's Development Programme. The tables present the needs in their order of frequency as follows:

- Mental Health
- Physical Health
- Accommodation
- Horses
- Education
- Training
- Traveller Men's Development Programme
- Employment
- Agencies
- Support
- Young Traveller Men

Abbreviations

Here is a list of abbreviations which are used in the tables and throughout this report:

HSE	- Health Service Executive
THU	- Traveller Health Unit
TMDP	- Traveller Mens Development Programme
TMHP	- Traveller Mens Health Programme
NGO	- Non-Governmental Organisation
DSFA	- Department of Social and Family Affairs
VEC	- Vocational Education Committee
G.P.s	- General Practitioners
TPHN	- Traveller Public Health Nurse
S.A.s	- State Agencies

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995) Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community, Dublin: Stationery Office

Mental Health

Need	Action	Outcomes
Tackle depression and mental health issues	Counselling, Talking Groups	Processing life issues, moving guilt, dealing with past life issues
High level of mortality	Health awareness and counselling TMDP	Dealing with bereavement, healthier lifestyles
Housing list mental strain	Need for go-between/ advocate	Create understanding, assist process, remove strain, improve mental/ physical health, remove indirect discrimination, negotiate relationship, mend broken relationship, assists both sides
Tackle machismo around mental health	Group work and counselling	Research and evaluate
Lack of diagnosis of mental health issues	Targeted Community Psychiatric services	Improve Traveller Men's ability to recognise mental health issues
Deal with mental health in schools	Targeted SPHE for Traveller Boys	Research and evaluate
Tackle use and misuse of antidepressants among Traveller Men	Training and monitoring by PHN and GP - TMDP	Research and evaluate
Deal with anxiety around talk of mental health	TMDP - Group work	Traveller Men more open and able to deal with mental wellbeing
Train workers in dealing effectively with Traveller Men's mental health	Training and monitoring by PHN and GP - TMDP	Effective intervention
Traveller Men's specific counselling service	HSE -THU to consider development of services with relevant parties	Research and evaluate
Tackle stress of work and social welfare	Special initiative - FÁS/ HSE/ DSFA	Research and evaluate upon and after implementation
Capitalise upon horses as outlet for depression	Develop Horse projects in each county	Evaluate project effectiveness
Tackle alcohol misuse	Counselling, group work and personal development	Research and evaluate
Open debate on DV with Traveller Men	TMDP - Pre-marriage courses - Experiential learning within programmes	Greater safety for partners, children and within the wider community

Physical Health

Need	Action	Outcomes
Traveller Men's understanding of health and general biology lacking	Training and education - experiential	Improve health knowledge, Improve families health, Improve contact with services
Improve attitude to health	Male health worker	Improve health
Tackle Traveller Men's attitude to GPs	Reduce fear and negativity towards GP	More interaction with health services
More effective culturally appropriate methods of disseminating health information	Mainstreaming TMHP Health Promotion focus on delivery methods	Better health outcomes and understanding for Traveller Men
Develop language to deal with health behaviours	Mainstreaming TMHP	Better health
Capitalise on positive Traveller Men's health	TMDP expansion	Better health
Married Traveller Men's health initiative	TMDP	Better health
Tie health training to other activities - horses - sport - skills training	Tie health training to other activities - horses - sport - skills training	Improve engagement
Examine what can be negotiated with Traveller Men for involvement in health training	Interagencies to develop plan for delivering health training and increase support for health training delivery	Improve engagement
Inform Traveller Men of impacts of ill- health and behaviour on self and family	TMDP.	Improve engagement
Increase GPs awareness of how Traveller Men engage	Development worker/ TMDP development	G.P's involved directly/ better engagement
Relevant speakers on alcohol and drug misuse	Development worker/ TMDP development	Wider engagement and better information delivery methods
Focus on Traveller men's blood pressure	Development worker/ TMDP development	Improved awareness and need for treatment
Incorporate education, leadership, social inclusion, communication skills, self-awareness, male gender conditioning, active citizenship, and civic understanding into health training	Development worker/ TMDP development	More health awareness and ability to express those for Traveller Men. Better relationships, health and options for Traveller Men
Health training to be run at night and during winter months on start-up projects	Development worker/ TMDP development	More Participation
Outreach should target men on side of road	Development workers	More inclusion
Increase level of contact hours Traveller Men have with health SP Service providers	THU - HSE - Development Workers	Better health outcomes and understanding for Traveller Men
Assess doctors needs	Training for G.P.'s	Develop GP's awareness of Traveller Men and give men the language to deal with their health issues
Debate on DV , Homosexuality, working, alcohol and drug use	Develop within programmes with Traveller Men, NGOs Statutory Agencies and Local Authorities	Open discussion and raise awareness of issues and health implications

Accommodation

Need	Action	Outcomes
Tackle fear of living among settled community	Integration. Identify everyone's fears of living in different communities	National understanding
Fear of being isolated from own community	Consult with Traveller men, Irish Horse Industry, Local and Central Government and lawyers	Horse industry legislation supports Traveller horse culture
Perception of broken promises by County Council	Transparency of process for Traveller Men	Understanding development process
To settle, to have a house	Address the concept	Informed decisions
To settle and to travel	Housing and halting site options	More flexible arrangements
Better facilities on halting site	Local Authority to adopt consultative design approach	Improved facilities to clients requirements

Horses

Need	Action	Outcomes
Use Traveller men's interest in horses to look at issues in own life	Horse project development	Potential for business and sport projects
Amend Control of Horses Act	Open discussion of fear	National understanding
Horse projects	Agree with Local Authorities	Increased solution through horse projects
Show case Traveller culture	As potential for future developments	Attractive option for integration.
Land for horses	Treat as a regular deal and go through the usual avenues	Don't start Traveller integration differently

Education

Need	Action	Outcomes
Disconnect school from religious rites	Communion, confirmation not part of school	Untangle religion and school retention
Tackle Traveller fear of school and education	Specific development work on fears	Overcome fears and identify education
Tackle Traveller Men's past negative educational experiences	Specific development work on identification of negativity	Understanding development process
Tackle fear of surveillance in education engagement	Specific focus on Traveller Men's fear of giving details	Development of trusting relationships
Focus on value of Traveller Men's place in education	Need for rewards and returns for educational participation	Shift in approach to encouraging Traveller Men into education
Focus on commitment from home in terms of children's education -especially fathers	Work with fathers to work with children. Increase returns from engagement	Children experience a more positive response from their fathers to their progress in education
Tackle fathers' desire to have young boys working rather than in school	Celebrate the father / son relationship. Guide towards more beneficial outcomes	Guide towards more beneficial outcomes.
Focus on relevance of school to Traveller Boys' lives - trade etc.	Explore the educational system for relevance and support	Educational system started for Traveller Boys
Focus on Traveller Men and Boys' coping mechanisms in relation to education and literacy	Examine how they cope and how they get beyond coping	Understanding and support to be built into education / school

Training

Need	Action	Outcomes
Training and Adult Education considered work	Refocus understanding of training	Better Training
Education and Literacy barrier to employment	Utilise appropriate reading programme	Increase of skills. Reduction of barriers
Increase options to gain skills	On-site training	Up-skilling
Need for rewards and returns for educational participation.	Engage FÁS, Department of Education and Science, AONTAS, DSFA and EU	Benefits and supports Traveller Men to engage in education
Capitalise on Traveller Men's ingenuity for earning as a focus for educational barriers and enterprise programmes	FÁS/ VEC/ Development worker/ Department of education - programme development, Enterprise Ireland, Bord na gCapall, Irish Bloodstock Industry, Bord na gCon	Clearer understanding and celebration of Traveller Men's earning ability
VEC Senior Traveller Training Centre - progression routes, career planning and pathways to employment for participants	Develop same	Inclusion and progression
All organisations - progression routes, career planning and pathways to employment for participants	Develop same	Inclusion and progression
Literacy developed in tandem with horse projects and other training opportunities	Take the time to use imaginative processes to achieve this goal. e.g. horse facilities	Traveller Men in their own specialities
Alternatives to literacy as the first rung on the ladder	Design alternative ways in to training opportunities	Traveller men involved in more advanced training levels and upskilling
Training leads to viable work	Apply FÁS Special Initiative	Research and evaluate

Traveller Men's Development Programme

Need	Action	Outcomes
Build Trust	Development/ outreach worker	Trust established over time with improved relationship
Understanding importance of negotiation inter-group, inter-family, settled	Training	Trust established over time with improved relationship
Understand Travellers Men's processes - daily routine, negotiation etc.	Training	Trust established over time with improved relationship
Tackle Traveller Men's lack of long-term planning	TMDP development	Planning skills and security of future
Tackle Traveller Men's motivation	TMDP development	Improved self-esteem and confidence and improved relationships
Assist Traveller Men in asking for help when needed	Development/ outreach worker	Motivation to tackle difficult issues in lives
Develop workers' awareness of pitfalls	Training	Improved worker awareness, approach and safety
Build respect for Traveller Men and by Traveller Men.	Involve Traveller men in addressing this issue	Better relationships between Traveller men and others

Employment

Need	Action	Outcomes
End employment discrimination	Targeted initiatives	Traveller Men in ongoing work
Tackle employment disillusionment and despondency of Traveller Men in terms of their inability to access employment	Inclusion through alliances with employers	Traveller Men in ongoing work
Employers to trust travellers	Targeted initiatives and relationship building	Traveller Men in ongoing work
Travellers to trust employers	Targeted initiatives and relationship building	Traveller Men in ongoing work
Begin discussion of work with Traveller Men	Development worker - FÁS/DSFA	Traveller Men become more open about their work.
Validate Traveller Men's work - especially in media - create positivity	Research, programme development, media representation	Traveller Men become more open and positive about their work - positive validation of work and life
Seek options to link Traveller Men work with wider economy	Special initiative - programme development - FÁS, DSFA, VEC, Development worker	Inclusion and recognition
Programme to establish self employed Traveller Men in wider economy	Special initiative - programme development - FÁS, DSFA, VEC, Development worker	Inclusion and recognition
Review legislation in terms of impact on Traveller Men's livelihood	Legal advice and research	Clarity and information
Tackle internal pressure in Travelling Community to not work in settled employment	Work it through the development programme	Reduce internal pressure

Agencies

Need	Action	Outcomes
Improve County Council and other agencies awareness of Traveller Community	Training with County Council on travelling community life. Traveller cultural awareness training - element of dynamics of marginalisation, psycho and social - experiential	Improved relationships
Increase capacity of Traveller PHN and Social Workers	HSE, Co.Council	Improve capacity to deal with issues
Retention of benefits if engaging	DSFA - Social welfare	Improve engagement
Holistic approach to work with Traveller Men family work	Importance of families included in programme	Strengths of family advanced - weaknesses identified
New facilities - handball alleys etc.	Co. Councils to develop in consultation	Improved living conditions



The Men's Development Network's Consultation of Traveller Men's Health Needs for the H.S.E.

Part 3 Traveller Men's Development Programme

Traveller Men's Development Programme

Context

The support and development of the Traveller Community in Ireland has been part of Government policy for some years. The Ten Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006- 2015, Towards 2016¹⁶, issued by the Department of the Taoiseach has created the framework for Traveller development work:

1. *Towards 2016* states "An integrated approach to providing services and supports to Travellers will be developed in line with the recommendations of the Report of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues, taking account of the Second Progress Report of the Traveller Monitoring Committee. The Government and social partners agree to give concentrated attention to achieving progress on this approach, including opportunities for Travellers to participate in employment in the public, private and voluntary sectors and to support measures to improve communication between Travellers and the general population."
2. The Report of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues places particular emphasis on the need for Interagency cooperation.
3. Circular letter LG12/06 from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government requesting that each City/County Development Board initiate a process of developing a strategic plan drawing together relevant agencies and organisations to agree how this can be best accomplished.
4. The relevant agencies have been drawn together by each City /County Development Board to form the Traveller Interagency Groups.
5. Each of the Traveller Interagency Groups has a Strategic Plan.
6. The Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform monitors the progress of the implementation of these Plans. The most recent progress report from the T.I.G.s was requested on 11th March 2008.
7. Each City or County Council has responsibility for these Traveller Interagency Groups.
8. The Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform and Pobal provide funding for Traveller Projects from the Dormant Accounts Fund.
9. Applications are only considered from the County and City Development Boards acting for the Traveller Interagency Groups established on foot of Circular letter LG12/06 from the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government

10. In addition Applications are only considered from Local Authorities or a designated statutory body where a County Strategy for the Traveller Community has been forwarded to the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform.
11. Project funding contracts are entered into with Pobal operating on behalf of the The Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform.
12. The submission date for Round 3 applications for the Traveller Interagency and Communications Fund was Friday 27th June 2008.

Key Documents

A full list of relevant documents can be found in the bibliography in Part 4. Listed here are some key documents that relate to both the context outlined above and the Traveller Men's Development Programme itself:

Department of the Taoiseach (2006) *Towards 2016: Ten-year framework social partnership agreement 2006-2015*. Dublin: Stationery Office

Department of Health and Children (2002) *Traveller health a national strategy 2002-2005 Health Promotion Unit*: Department of Health and Children

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (2005) *Second Progress Report Of the Committee to Monitor and Co-Ordinate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Task Force on the Travelling Community*. <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/TaskForceRpt2.pdf/Files/TaskForceRpt2.pdf>

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (2006) *Report of the High Level Group on Traveller Issues*

City and County Development Boards Interagency Strategic Plans 2003 - 2007

Pavee Point,(2003) *Dismantling the Traveller Economy? A Case Study of the impact of increasing regulation on the Traveller economy: the implications of the EU Directive on the 'End of Life Vehicles'*. Dublin: Pavee Point

Irish Traveller Movement (2002) *End of the Road: Report on the Socio-Economic Consequences of the Control of Horses Act 1996 on the Travelling Community*. Dublin: Irish Traveller Movement

Fountain, J. (2006) *An overview of the nature and extent of illicit drug use amongst the traveller community: an exploratory study*. Dublin : Stationery Office

¹⁶ Department of the Taoiseach (2006) *Towards 2016: Ten-year framework social partnership agreement 2006-2015*, p.58 Dublin: Stationery Office

Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform (1995)
Task Force on the Travelling Community. Dublin:
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Evidence Based Work

It is key to Traveller Men's Development work that it is based, in the first instance on the information given, issues raised, and needs expressed by Traveller men themselves. There are a number of current sources of this information:

- MDN's region-wide Traveller Men's Health Consultation for the H.S.E.¹⁷ (The Men's Development Network (2008) Traveller Men: A Consultation with Traveller Men and Service Providers on Traveller Men's Needs. Waterford: The Men's Development Network). Traveller men, Service Providers, Agencies and Organisations have already contributed their needs and issues to this Consultation and these are key to informing development work with Traveller Men.
- Needs Analysis derived from the Traveller Men's Health Consultation included in this document. The Needs Analysis is set out in sections that focus on the issues and on each local area at a time.
- Any Consultations, Studies or Research that reports on Traveller men in general and the area where the work is going to be based. Several of these studies are listed in the bibliography in part 4.

Traveller Men's Development Programme

The Men's Development Network's (MDN) approach to men's development is to build relationships with men by engaging with them, identifying their issues, addressing these issues with them and empowering them to take steps to deal with them in order to achieve resolution. In this way, over time, a Development Programme emerges. This process is based on communication. Engagement is required first, followed by the development of trust and a working relationship. Once results are apparent then the engagement increases, participants become aware of the development process and the development programme starts to form around the activity. As one Traveller development worker put it:

*"Engaging with Traveller men in any other way is putting the cart before the horse"*¹⁸

The Traveller Men's Development Programme will follow the Men's Development Network's methodology. As MDN sees it, Traveller men's voices haven't come

through very strongly as yet in Traveller development work. There have been real strides and gains made by many Traveller women through the Primary Health Care strategy and education initiatives which is fantastic. In development work women usually come to the fore initially and men are slow to follow. Women, once they have made some progress can see that the men in their communities are not availing of the same opportunities which are also available to them. Women often want their men to take these opportunities and can be great allies to the work with men.

The first step is to talk to the men themselves. Communication is essential in this work; supporting Traveller men to express what they actually want and need and being guided by what they say. One Traveller man said it clearly in a recent feasibility study: *"Sitting down with Travellers and discussing the problems and getting them involved in finding solutions."*¹⁹

The provision of training to respond to Traveller men's needs is for a later stage of the programme once the needs are clearly defined and specific training becomes appropriate. Otherwise we are definitely putting the cart before the horse.

To Communicate is to give or exchange information, to transmit or reveal a feeling or thought by speech, writing, or gesture so that it is clearly understood, to share a good personal understanding and to be connected or provide access to each other. "Communicate" shares the same root as "community". MDN works from a Community Development perspective as defined and supported by the Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs' Community Development Programme.

There are a number of parallel communities involved when Community Development is undertaken. In this case these include: Travellers and settled people; Statutory Agencies and N.G.O.s; and the Authorities and the Citizens. Developing, supporting and enhancing Communication between Traveller men themselves and their own community, and between these parallel communities, and in the process addressing their needs, is the goal of this programme.

¹⁷ The Men's Development Network (2008) Traveller Men: A Consultation with Traveller Men and Service Providers on Traveller Men's Needs. Waterford: The Men's Development Network
¹⁸ Contribution at sub-committee Traveller Interagency Group, May 2008

¹⁹ Lynam, S. & Dowdall, B. (2008) Feasibility Study Regarding the Establishment of a Horse Care Project in Carlow. Carlow: St. Catherines Community Services Centre.

This Traveller Men's Development Programme is designed in the first instance to engage with Traveller Men.

Secondly it is designed to engage with Traveller men so that they can develop effective ways to identify and communicate their needs and to build effective communication with the Service Providers where necessary.

Thirdly it is designed so that this engagement is done by valuing, enhancing and reinforcing the positives in their existing culture, including their sons in the development process, and addressing progression.

The programme is set out here. The phases are designed to develop good communication at all levels at each stage so that better and better communication develops as the programme progresses.

The Men's Development Network's experience in men's development shows that 2 years is the minimum time required for Men's Development Programmes to have an ongoing beneficial effect on men.

The Programme

Phase 1

- Review the MDN's Traveller Men's Health Consultation and needs analysis, 2008.
- Liaise with agencies already working with the men.
- Outreach to the Traveller men.
- Identify and meet with the Traveller men.
- Communicate: ask, listen, hear, record, report, respond.
- Prepare a focused needs analysis with the Traveller men who actually engage.
- Catalogue the individual needs.
- Organise meetings to address each set of needs.
- Maintain awareness on opportunity and pitfalls.

Phase 2

- Notify the relevant Service Providers, Statutory Agency or N.G.O., of the needs expressed by Traveller men: e.g V.E.C. for Education, FÁS for skills training, Youth Service for young men, existing Traveller projects locally, H.S.E./MDN for Traveller Men's Health Programme, etc.

- Work with each group of Traveller men to identify ways to satisfy each particular set of needs.
- Engage the Traveller men with the relevant Agency and the opportunities they offer.
- Evaluate level of communication at this stage for progress comparison later.
- Identify and address any barriers to communication.
- Establish enhanced communication between Agencies and the Traveller men.

Phase 3

- Support Traveller men to participate in the opportunities that will start the process to meet their development needs.
- Run parallel support meetings with the Traveller men to support their continued engagement and review their progress.
- Quantify and record progress and identify next steps at each review stage.
- Check that the possibilities and opportunities are being clearly communicated and understood.

Phase 4

- Work with Traveller men and support agencies to plan next steps and explore ways to take them.
- Identify this as a development process once it has become established as the process that they are engaging in.
- In collaboration with the Traveller men review this Traveller Men's Development Programme and redesign as required so that it best suits their developing needs.

Phase 5

- Run the Traveller Men's Development Programme in the relevant centres with the relevant agencies support.
- Evaluate the Development Process that has occurred and the Programme that has derived from it.
- Evaluate what has gone well and the level of communication achieved.
- Evaluate what would be done differently the next time where communication has been poor.
- Make the Traveller Men's responses the priority in the evaluation.
- Report and propose next steps guided by their responses.

Phase 6

- Communicate the results at all levels, locally, regionally and nationally.
- Discuss the outcomes with Traveller men and service providers and collate this electronically (Cd's, DVD's etc.)
- Disseminate the information appropriately.

Training Programme

For this to be successful it will require a training programme. Parallel self-development and training for those who work with Traveller men is a very useful parallel support to the worker. MDN has begun to develop a reflective training programme for this purpose. This training will develop workers awareness of opportunities and pitfalls and will lead to improved worker awareness, approach and safety.

Attitudes and Barriers

The Traveller Men's Development Programme is informed by the consultation²⁰ discussed above. This consultation describes Traveller men's attitudes to engagement and the barriers they face in their interaction with society. It is clear from the Traveller men's consultation that there are many barriers to Traveller men engaging in programmes. It is important that the users of the Traveller Men's Development Programme are aware of and informed by these findings which are listed here.

Traveller Men's Attitudes to Engagement

Disconnection

There are Traveller men who are disconnected and unlikely to engage. These men may have a history of contact with the criminal justice system or may be in conflict with state agencies and other Travellers for a variety of reasons. These men may be living in a situation which is so oppressive in terms of their accommodation status, economic struggles and difficulties with state agencies, that they do not have the energy, space or ability to give time from their daily life to engage. However, for them, facing the issues or even the offer of activity as respite from the day to day may begin to show a path to engagement and a possibility of ending their effective disenfranchisement from society.

Fear of Scrutiny

There are men who resolutely place themselves outside of engagement. Their involvement in activities that they feel they would not like to have scrutinised means that they will not engage at any point. The reasons these men will not engage include being involved in employment and claiming social welfare benefits, and more seriously anti-social and criminal activity. These men therefore see no reason or benefit to engagement and place themselves beyond it.

Hierarchy and the Challenge of Engagement

There are men who do not engage because they have placed themselves in a position within the Traveller Community where engagement would reduce their stature and perhaps dominance. Traveller culture is strongly patriarchal and hierarchies exist. Males have a position within Traveller society and engagement may challenge this. Traveller men are strongly self-reliant and any help seeking behaviour may run counter to this culture. Miller²¹ has pointed out the "crabs in the barrel syndrome" within marginalised groups and men at risk. "If any among the marginalised are liberated from their circumstances then this implicitly condemns those that remain. To prevent this from happening those who appear to be attempting to escape are pulled back into the barrel. Others seeing this are discouraged from even attempting to escape"²². Engaging and moving on may be a disruption to the natural order or status quo therefore there may be an implicit dissuasion from engaging.

Open to Convincing

There are men who need convincing that engagement is benign and will not have an impact on their ability to live their lives the way they wish to live. Convincing these men means allowing them to see that those with whom they engage will understand them. Among this group are men who can discover their innate abilities and the value of what they can contribute. Some are men who do have some stature in their community and could grow to a place where they have the ability to offer others support. This group could provide the opportunity to build social capital within the Traveller community.

Prepared for Engagement

There are men who are prepared to engage in activities and programmes as a way of discovering how they can address the issues impacting on themselves and their families.

Traveller Women's Participation

Programmes such as Primary Health Care for Traveller Women and other training, education and development opportunities for Traveller women, may impact positively on Traveller men's interest in becoming involved in programmes of development. Having a sense of being left behind some Traveller men have taken up the opportunities which have been offered.

Horse Projects

In counties where work was carried out with horses Traveller men have become involved. Many Traveller men's lives are closely tied up with horses. However the Control of Horses Act has introduced legislation which has had a limiting effect on Traveller men's culture²³. Horse projects are sought in most counties as a means to seek solutions to the issue. Horse projects are also an avenue in which Traveller men can

²⁰ The Men's Development Network (2008) Traveller Men: A Consultation with Traveller Men and Service Providers on Traveller Men's Needs. Waterford: The Men's Development Network
²¹ Miller, E., (1991) Men at Risk. Jamaica: Jamaica Publishing House

²² Ibid. 266

²³ Irish Traveller Movement (2002) End of the Road: Report on the Socio-Economic Consequences of the Control of Horses Act 1996 on the Travelling Community. Dublin: Irish Traveller Movement

begin to engage with providers on their terms and with their interests in mind.

Machismo

Traveller men may participate because it allows them to simply be together as men. Those men who do participate are courageous because of the views that other Traveller men hold. Those who do participate “get stick off other men for taking part”²⁴. While this also exists within the settled community it was the view of many service providers in the consultation that machismo played a large part in how Traveller men are in the world and how they engage with services.

Location, Issues and Agencies

Location can have an impact on the level and likelihood of engagement. The greater the problems facing a particular group in a particular location the less likely it is for men to engage in addressing the issues that are fundamental to them. If particular agencies are in difficulty in addressing these issues, especially if these issues have a long history, the likelihood that engagement will happen is diminished to a greater or lesser extent.

Barriers to Engagement

Historical Suspicion

Suspicion arising from experiencing life as a Traveller man, is a continuous barrier to any attempt at connecting with Traveller men. This ranges from suspicion of the settled community, to suspicions of the mechanisms of the state. While here these are both separate a Traveller man may see the mechanisms of the state as the face of the settled community and those who wish to deny the Travelling community the right to their own existence.

Societal Position

Any perceived threat to a Traveller man’s standing in his community, at his location or within his family, may contribute to a Traveller man finding it difficult or impossible to take the route of engagement, if he feels it offers a threat to his dominant role.

Economic Suspicion

Suspicion that engagement will have an impact on his ability to earn and provide for his family may be too worrying for a man offered engagement. This includes social welfare issues as discussed below.

Rigid Social Welfare Mechanisms

The rigidity of the Social Welfare system regarding payments can be a barrier when a short-term view is taken. In a community who rightly believe that the promises offered to them over the years have not materialised then this short-term view is understandable.

Rigid Paths of Learning

Insistence on rigid paths of learning may prevent a man accessing training and development that he might otherwise engage with.

Agency Engagement

The history of outreach and engagement between settled and Traveller communities and the record of statutory and other agencies in connecting with Traveller communities, varies from place to place. These histories have a lasting impact on any engagement by any agency in any area.

Inclusivity

These attitudes and barriers are not exclusive to any particular group of Traveller men in any particular location. Rather they span the range of situations Traveller men are in including from accommodation status, age and employment status. Traveller men live in trailers and caravans on the side of the road, in council houses in council estates, in private houses in private housing estates, in Trailers and caravans on Halting sites, in bungalows on halting sites and so on. Traveller men work, are unemployed, retired, or are looking after a household and children. The range of attitudes Traveller men have towards engaging with service provision spans all these categories and situations and is not exclusive to any one category.

Engagement

Interventions in Traveller men’s lives must take account of where these men are in their lives. The conditions under which Traveller men are living i.e., the structures, formal and informal, that impact on how they live their lives, and the level of control they can bring to their own lives, impact on whether a Traveller man is prepared, able, or feels empowered, to engage. Men that can be engaged in addressing what they perceive is a problem for them, can be engaged initially in that issue. Subsequently they can then begin to be open to addressing other fundamental issues within their lives. Engagement depends on understanding what the issues are that face these men and what the possibilities are in that place at that time. It is essential that we look beyond the obvious to find pathways to engagement. As well as being Traveller men who are interested in horses, and not all are, there are men who are interested in themselves, their families, their sons and daughters, their living conditions, their health and their futures.

²⁴ The Men’s Development Network (2008) Traveller Men: A Consultation with Traveller Men and Service Providers on Traveller Men’s Needs. Waterford: The Men’s Development Network

Benefits of the Development Programme to Traveller Men

- Traveller men will be engaged in dialogue and communication in a meaningful way that will support the positive aspects of their current lifestyle, interests and occupation from the outset and add value to these over the period of the project.
- Relationships and communication between Traveller Men and the Service Providers, Statutory Agencies and N.G.O.s will be improved.
- Traveller Men's understanding of the need to attend to their own responsibilities will be established and the abilities and skills needed to grapple with those issues will be developed in more formal and regular ways through communication, information, training and education in their areas of interest.
- More effective communication will be established.
- A development and engagement methodology will have been established providing a sustainable process for continuation.

The Programme will strengthen integration with agencies and organisations to maximise its benefits. Agencies and organisations cooperating in the delivery of the programme will maximise its benefits. Service Providers, Agencies and Organisations have already cooperated with and contributed to the MDN's Traveller Men's Health consultation for the H.S.E. and the issues identified by them are key to informing the Programme.

In addition to those with the Service Providers, relationships will be built with other relevant organisations by establishing communication between them and the Traveller Men in relation to their needs; these could include:

- Trades Councils
- Schools and Colleges
- Chambers of Commerce
- Irsih Turf Club
- National Stud.
- Irish Horse Racing Board
- SUV Suppliers
- Board na gCon
- Sponsors
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Trade and Enterprise
- Agricultural Colleges
- I.B.E.C.
- Rotary Clubs
- Solicitors
- Developers
- Auctioneers
- IFA
- Macra na Feirme
- Bord na gCapall
- Credit Union

In this way communication and relationships can be developed between the Traveller Men and society.

One Page Guide to the Programme methodology

Read

- The findings from the MDN's Traveller men's consultation.

Ask

- Ask the man how he is
- Ask the man what he wants
- Hear the man out
- Ask him to a meeting of men

Meet

- Hold a meeting
- Ask the men what they want
- Make a list of their answers
- Agree to meet again to work on the list

Work

- Meet again
- Work with each man on how he can get what he wants
- Be realistic
- Distinguish between needs and wants

"You can't always get what you want but if you try sometimes you might find you get what you need" The Rolling Stones.

- Work with each man towards getting what he needs

Support

Support each Traveller man to:

- Identify and access the services or connections that he needs
- Communicate with the relevant people
- Build relationships with them
- Avail of the services or opportunities on offer
- See it through if appropriate

Review

- Progress
- Steps taken
- Service being provided or opportunity being availed of
- Need for any re-negotiation or changes
- Prospects for continuation

Plan

- Graduation or completion.
- Next steps
- To inform policy and practice

Repeat

Programme Implementation

Using this method for The Traveller Men's Development Programme will require a Men's Outreach and Development Worker on the ground. If the MDN are funded to provide this worker post, they will be supported by the staff team at MDN including:

- **Alan O'Neill** B.Sc. Arch. (Hons) Dip. Arch. (Dist.) M.A. M.R.I.A.I. the Director of MDN will oversee the work. Alan is a qualified Architect. Before founding the MDN twelve years ago Alan spent many years as Course Leader in Architecture in W.I.T., working with the V.E.C. and intensely involved in Curriculum and Course Development.
- **For the focused local Consultations:** Nicholas Clarke B.A. M.Sc. Applied Social Research H.Dip S.P.H.E., MDN's Researcher, will provide Consultation, Needs Analysis and Evaluation.
- **For Traveller Men's Health:** Lorcan Brennan MDN's Men's Development Health Programme Coordinator. Lorcan developed the Traveller Men's Health Programme in partnership with the H.S.E. and supports widespread use of the programme.
- **Communication:** Lorcan Brennan and Aiden O'Brien are MDN's media production team. Lorcan produces and presents MDN's "Coming into View" Programmes on South-East Radio. Aiden films the interviews that Lorcan does for these programmes. As a result MDN is building a library of CDs and DVDs of Men's Development work for dissemination countrywide. Traveller men have already featured on these programmes and more can be included in this process, as can the results of the work.
- **For Legal Matters:** Catriona Connors Byrne is a qualified Legal Secretary and a Traveller. Catriona provides the Legal services to the MDN for all our Horse Project and Horse Management work, and for other legal matters that may arise in the work.

H.D Keane and Co. Solicitors 22 O'Connell St. Waterford. provide the overall legal service to the MDN.

In addition to the service providers and agencies mentioned in the **Traveller Men's Development Programme** there will be others in some areas that haven't been mentioned. The Programme is designed so that any key Agencies can be worked with directly.



The Men's Development Network's Consultation of Traveller Men's Health Needs for the H.S.E.

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The Men's Development Network
30 O'Connell St., Waterford
tel: 051 844 260/1 fax: 051 855 264
email: men@mens-network.net

