



**The National Mental Health  
Stigma Reduction Partnership**

# **Action Toolkit**

**EVERY ONE  
OF US  
HAS THE  
POWER  
TO END  
STIGMA**

This toolkit gives you all the information you need to start organising a See Change activity. It contains information on what See Change is, how you can become involved and the steps to take in organising your activity.

All See Change activities must be registered with See Change and approved before the See Change branding can be used. Register your activity today by e-mailing [info@seechange.ie](mailto:info@seechange.ie) or calling us on 01-8601620 for further information and help with planning your activity

## Contents

<b>P3.</b>	<b>See Change: The story so far</b>
<b>P4.</b>	<b>How can I get involved?</b>
<b>P5.</b>	<b>What works: The key features of a stigma-challenging event</b>
<b>P6.</b>	<b>Possible stigma challenging activities</b>
<b>P7.</b>	<b>Activity planning tips</b>
<b>P9.</b>	<b>How do I promote my activity?</b>
<b>P10.</b>	<b>Working with the media</b>
<b>P11.</b>	<b>Recruiting volunteers/Health and Safety</b>
<b>P13.</b>	<b>After the activity</b>

## See Change: The story so far

See Change is Ireland's national programme working to change minds about mental health problems in Ireland. We're working in partnership with over 50 organisations to create a disruptive, community driven social movement to reduce the stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems.

## What is stigma?

Stigma is one of the most significant problems encountered by people with mental health problems. Learning to live with mental health problems is made more difficult, when someone experiences the prejudice caused by stigma. Stigma is hurtful and can be used to exclude and marginalise people. The prejudice and fear caused by stigma can isolate people from society and prevent them from coming forward and seeking the help they need.

Stigma can also stop people offering help or being supportive. Stigma often inhibits people from getting the jobs they are qualified to do and it can prevent people with mental health problems from playing an active role in their community.

## What are the aims of See Change?

- Create an environment where people can be more open and positive in their attitudes and behaviour towards mental health
- Promote greater understanding and acceptance of people with mental health problems
- Create greater understanding and knowledge of mental health problems and of health services that provide support for mental health problems
- Reduce stigma associated with mental health problems and challenge discrimination.

## How can I get involved?

Tackling the stigma associated with mental health problems will not happen overnight. See Change wants to create a national social movement to drive change through a targeted, community driven approach - has the potential to challenge the stigma of mental health to problems drive change within Irish society, and help to lay the necessary foundations for a real and positive transformation of how mental health problems are perceived.

However we cannot do it alone; there are lots of ways- big and small that you can get involved with See Change.

We are asking people to organize local and regional activities across the country which will raise awareness of See Change and bring about a positive change in public attitudes and behaviour towards people with mental health problems.

By working together we can spread the messages of the programme throughout Ireland and involve local communities in the See Change movement. Reducing stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems is a huge task and will only be achieved by working together.

### **By becoming involved with the See Change programme, your organisation/ community will:**

- Raise awareness of stigma and discrimination in your community
- Empower people with mental health problems to share their experiences and take action to reduce stigma and discrimination
- Benefit from the support and the resources of the See Change team
- Have access to campaign materials and resources

### **See Change will help you out with your event in whatever way we can by providing the following:**

- Advice and tips on organising your event.
- Promotional material for your event if required.
- Promotion of your activity on the See Change website and Facebook and Twitter pages.

## What works?

### The key features of a stigma-challenging project:

#### Messages to challenge stigma

- Mental health problems can affect anyone at any time during their lives.
- Mental health problems are part and parcel of being human
- People with mental health problems can and do recover.
- People affected by mental health problems are entitled to the same human rights as everybody else in society without discrimination.
- Every person – whether you have been personally touched by mental health problems or not – has the power to help stop the stigma and discrimination of mental health problems.

#### Bring people together: Social contact

At See Change, we believe that the stories of people who have experienced mental health problems and the associated stigma have the power to change peoples' attitudes towards mental health problems. Personal stories help people relate to those who are experiencing mental health problems, in a way that statistics cannot.

Our research has shown that social contact is key in breaking down stigma and discrimination. Social contact brings people together people with and without experience of mental health problems on an equal basis. Research has shown that getting to know someone with a mental health problem in this way challenges personally held negative beliefs and reduces stigma. So when organizing an activity, the important part is the involvement of both people with and without mental health problems rather than just the activity.

#### Always include a call to action.

Every stigma-challenging interaction is an opportunity to open up a conversation not only with the person in front of you but hopefully with their friends, families and colleagues. Encourage others to spread the See Change message through their words, actions and online.

See Change's online story-telling campaign is 'Make a Ripple' (See [www.seechange.ie](http://www.seechange.ie)) Here people are encouraged to speak out or make pledges against stigma or share their own experiences of mental health problems, in order to build public awareness and a shared understanding of the mental health problems that can affect any of us.

Would-be 'Ripple Makers' can also post their messages or stories on [See Change's facebook page](#) or tweet a shorter message using the #makearipple hashtag. Both will automatically find their way onto the Make a Ripple portal.

## Possible stigma-challenging activities:

### *Start the conversation*

#### Workplace

Table Quiz	Raffle
Talent competition	Swimming challenge
BBQ	Karaoke night
Comedy night	Football tournament
Race night	See Change awareness day
Car wash	Blind date
Cheese and wine night	Casino night
Give up smoking challenge	Dress down day
Sports day	Charity trek challenge
Coffee morning	Talk on mental health in the workplace
Treasure hunt	

#### Community

Art competition/exhibition
Bingo
Poetry/writing competition
Book/Cake sale
Movie night
Dinner party
Cookery classes
Family fun day
Book club
Fancy dress event
Rag week event in colleges
Stage a play
Music event

#### Sports activities

Tennis tournament
Horse riding
Tug O War
Skydive
Marathon
Pilates/yoga
Sports day
Abseiling
Cycling challenge
Basketball tournament
Orienteering
Swimming gala

## Activity Planning Tips

### 1. Think of a good idea:

Choosing the right idea is the first step to make sure your activity is a success. Keep it simple and make sure you have enough time to plan your activity. Do some research and ask family and friends for their opinion. Bring together local partners and people with experience of mental health problems who may be able to support you.

Remember that the important thing with See Change activities is that you want to highlight the key message of the campaign and try to reduce stigma and discrimination that people with mental health problem can experience. You also need to promote social contact between people with and without experience of mental health problems on an equal basis. Think of ways that your activity can do this and new and interesting ways to get the message of the campaign to members of the public.

### 2. Plan the essentials:

Decide on the following giving yourself enough time to organise the activity:

**Date** Make sure your event does not clash with any important local or national events.

#### **Budget**

- Set out a clear budget that takes account of fixed (venue hire, insurance) and variable costs (food and drink, promotional materials).
- Make sure that you set up proper financial processes to record income and expenditure and keep copies of all receipts and records of donations made.
- Ask local businesses to sponsor your event

#### **Venue**

The venue you choose can have a big impact on the atmosphere and attraction of your event. Some outdoor venues need permission from the council or landowners so this could take some time to organise. Local partners might have a venue you could use. The venue should be wheelchair accessible, easy to get to and suitable for the activities you have planned.

When you book your venue make sure that you get written confirmation detailing:

- Date/ time area will be used for event
- Hire costs and other potential costs
- Site plan of event layout
- Venue contacts for the event day
- Full terms and conditions

### 3. Register your activity

To register your activity you will need to send an e-mail to [info@seechange.ie](mailto:info@seechange.ie) or phone us on 01- 8601620 with the following information:

- Date/ Time of activity
- Location of activity
- Type of activity
- Contact name and delivery address for promotional materials
- How many participants you are expecting

### 4. Promotional Materials

Once you have registered your event, See Change will issue promotional material for your event if required.

### 5. Pledge

We are asking people to pledge to help reduce stigma and discrimination associated with mental health problems. You can help with this by making the pledge part of your activity. If you are holding a public event, distribute See Change pledge cards and ask people to make their own pledge. People can then make a commitment to taking action – this could be learning more about mental health stigma and discrimination, speaking out against stigma and discrimination, or sharing personal experiences of mental health problems with others. Contact [info@seechange.ie](mailto:info@seechange.ie) to get pledge cards for your event.

### 6. Make a Ripple

Don't forget to direct people to the Make a Ripple on the See Change website [www.seechange.ie](http://www.seechange.ie)

### 7. Have fun!!!

Please send any photos or updates on your event to [info@seechange.ie](mailto:info@seechange.ie)



## How do I promote my activity?

Publicity is the key to getting your event noticed and getting people to come along. Here are some ideas on creating awareness of your event:

- Post details on your **Facebook** page and ask your company to post it on their website also. See Change will also post the event on our Facebook and Twitter pages and website once you have registered your event.
- Send **e-mails** to all your friends, family and colleagues and ask them to send on to their contacts.
- If you have a budget for advertising and are planning to use advertising to publicise your event, please get in touch with the See Change team to see how we can work together. See Change can provide you with tested campaign materials which should keep your costs down and maximise the impact of your advertising.
- **Get on Twitter** and tweet about your event.
- **Use local media** to publicise your event.
- Put up **posters** and **leaflets** in your workplace, local shops, libraries, schools, colleges, hospitals, community halls, sports centres and anywhere else you can think of.
- Ask local businesses for **sponsorship**
- Create **partnerships with mental health organisations**, service user and carers, voluntary groups and local businesses to help raise the profile of your event.
- Do you know any local **celebrities** who would be prepared to come along and support the event, maybe a GAA player, local radio DJ, TV personality?
- Is there a **local spokesperson** that could open the event or talk to media, maybe someone with self-experience of mental health issues or a local health professional?

You can become familiar with the See Change campaign by looking at our website [www.seechange.ie](http://www.seechange.ie) or if you have any questions please contact a member of the See Change team on 01-8601620.

## Working with the Media

Engaging with the local media can result in free publicity for your event. Media coverage also helps spread your key messages about mental health stigma and discrimination. It is a good idea when planning your activity to link in with the See Change campaign team for advice on how best to work with the local media.

### Top Tips

1. **Contact details.** It is important to know who the right reporter to contact is. You can find this out by calling the news desk or by consulting the See Change campaign team.
2. **Finding an angle.** Your activity will be more appealing to local newspapers if it has an interesting angle. Figure out what is unusual or interesting about your activity and highlight this to your local media in advance of your event.
3. **Local radio.** Talk to your local radio station and see if they have any programmes that will cover your event.
4. **TV.** If your event will be visually interesting or unusual the TV news may attend.
5. **Spokespersons.** Have a local spokesperson for your activity. This can be a local person with experience of mental health problems, a local celebrity or a local mental health professional.
6. **Media contact.** Have a designated media contact person for your event. This will be the person who handles media queries and requests for information.
7. **Personal experience.** The media are always interested in the stories of people with personal experience of mental health problems.
8. **Deadlines.** Remember that media organisations work to very tight deadlines. Be as organised as possible and pass on any information required as promptly as possible.
9. **Messages.** See Change's key messages should form the basis of what you say to the media. It is important to get these messages across so that stigma and discrimination can be reduced.
10. **Media monitoring.** Keep a copy of any media coverage of your event. The See Change campaign can help you monitor media coverage of your event.

## **Recruiting volunteers to help with your event**

- You may need to recruit some enthusiastic volunteers to help with the organisation on the day of the event. Volunteers can help you with registration, putting up signs and banners, handing out promotional material, setting up and clearing up after the event.
- See Change can provide you with t-shirts for volunteers to wear.
- Apart from asking friends, family and colleagues for help, you can also ask volunteering organisations, local sports clubs, employers, colleges and local charities to support you.
- It is good practice to pay volunteers travel expenses for the day and provide breaks throughout the day.
- You will need to ensure that you are covered by insurance for your event.

## **Health and Safety/Legal Requirements**

### **Permission**

- Always seek permission from the owner of the premises before you hold your event.
- If you are holding an event in a public space you must get a Garda permit from your local Garda office. You will need to apply to your local Garda station a couple of weeks in advance for this.

### **Licences**

Some of the following activities may require a licence so please contact See Change if organising any of the following activities:

- Providing food and drink
- Selling alcohol
- Organising raffle, sweepstakes, lottery etc. (Raffles must take place during your event and all tickets must be sold on the premises during the event).
- Music or dancing events. You can apply for a music licence by e-mailing [licensing@imro.ie](mailto:licensing@imro.ie) directly.

### **Insurance**

- You will need to ensure you are covered by insurance: Check public liability insurance.
- Events such as art exhibitions and concerts may require additional cover.

### **First Aid**

If an event is open to the public you must have first aid representatives on site and make sure they are available to transport people who may need hospital care. You can also contact St John's Ambulance or the Order of Malta.

## **Disability Access**

- Ensure that there is wheelchair/ disabled access to your venue
- Ensure that there are disabled toilets and changing facilities
- Disabled parking should be available
- Ask people to contact you with their access needs so you can book activities and venues appropriate to your participants needs.
- Information should be clear and concise and easily accessible for those with disabilities.

## **Mental Health**

In addition to the physical well-being of participants at your event, make sure that your event is supportive to people experiencing mental health problems by providing a quiet area away from the activities.

## **Stay Safe**

- For public collections please ensure that all collection boxes are sealed and that they are never too full and are emptied regularly. Volunteers should collect in pairs for safety reasons and make sure that you are aware of their location. Please ensure that they do not carry personal valuables with them as See Change cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage to items.
- Please ensure that all money is kept secure and that there is someone in charge of looking after it throughout the event and when counting funds raised please do so in the presence of another person to avoid discrepancies.
- Risk assessment of venue: Identify any possible hazards that may occur on the day of the event and try to minimise or prevent them. Make sure your event is child friendly and that there are meeting points for children and parents.
- Ensure that the venue has fire safety regulations in place and it is also a good idea to have an evacuation procedure in place. Make sure all involved are aware of this procedure in advance.
- Check if the venue has Public Liability Insurance to cover the event in case of accident or damage. Ensure that the insurance policy fully covers the activities that are taking place.

## After the Activity

- Make sure to thank all the volunteers and organisations who have helped out with your event and let them know how much was raised.
- We would love to hear from you after the activity to see how it went and if you thought it had an impact on breaking down stigma and discrimination around mental health issues. Please take a few minutes to complete our questionnaire after your event
- If you have any photographs from your event please send them into us and we will include the details on our Facebook page and the See Change website.

If you have any questions on any of the above please do not hesitate to contact See Change at 01- 860 1620 or e-mail [info@seechange.ie](mailto:info@seechange.ie)

We would be delighted to help you in any way we can.

Best of luck!

The See Change Team