

#RCSIttogether Bulletin 11 - Walking, Keeping in Touch, Vaccines and Decision Making and wonderful image of RCSI

Dear Colleagues,

As another week draws to a close, I hope you are all doing well wherever your office is now – a spare room, the kitchen table or your bedroom. Our staff have been fantastic in continuing to do great work in all sorts of home environments and challenging circumstances, thank you for all you are doing.

For our final year Medical students, yesterday was Ireland Match Day 2020 for those who have secured intern positions in the Irish healthcare system. Another milestone for our newest doctors and we wish them all the best as they embark on their professional careers at such a difficult time.

#RCSIttogether Learning

Thanks to everyone who joined the #RCSIttogether webinar this week on “COVID-19: How to talk and listen to the young people you live with” led by Dr. Trudy Meehan, our new colleague in the Centre for Positive Psychology and Health. If you missed it you can watch a recording [here](#). Next week Dr. Annie Curtis will host a webinar called ‘If you don’t snooze you lose’. Annie will be looking at the vital role sleep plays for our mental wellbeing and importantly at this time how it helps to keep our immune system in shape. If you would like to join, please sign up [here](#).

As the global effort to find a COVID19 vaccine intensifies, you might be interested in watching [this](#) roundtable held in early March as part of the RCSI MyHealth series on the importance of vaccinations. Professors James Paul O’Neill, Karina Butler and Sam McConkey are interviewed by Dr. Ciara Kelly, a really informative session which we think you will enjoy.

Our final recommendation today is a series of short videos on ‘[Time Tested Methods for Making Complex Decisions](#)’. Decision making is difficult in an uncertain world and right now all across RCSI our colleagues are grappling with complex problems which have no easy or obvious solutions. These videos look at tools and techniques which can help us identify blind spots, remain open to a wide range of possible solutions and choose wisely among them.

Barry Holmes
Director of Human Resources

#RCSIttogether Health Science

With increasing numbers of people walking during this pandemic, we thought it timely to share some interesting information regarding the benefits of walking, and some of the research undertaken in this topic by Prof Suzanne McDonough, Head of School of Physiotherapy.

Research and brief synopsis of walking evidence:

1. [UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#): “Spreading activity across the day or week can help make the guidelines achievable within daily living; for example, **walking**, wheeling or cycling for daily travel is often the easiest way to get physically active”. “Each week, adults should accumulate at least 150 minutes (2 1/2 hours) of moderate intensity activity (such as **brisk walking** or cycling); or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity (such as running); or even shorter durations of very vigorous intensity activity (such as sprinting or stair climbing); or a combination of moderate, vigorous and very vigorous intensity activity”.
2. [Even a low-dose of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity reduces mortality by 22% in adults aged >= 60 years: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#): There is emerging evidence that for inactive older adults, replacing sedentary behaviour with light-intensity activity is likely to produce some health benefits. Specifically, for individuals who perform no or little MVPA, replacing sedentary or inactive behaviours with light-intensity activity (such as walking at 2 miles per hour, dusting or polishing furniture, or easy gardening) reduces the risk of all-cause mortality, cardiovascular disease incidence and mortality, and type 2 diabetes (2).
3. [Self-rated walking pace and all-cause, cardiovascular disease and cancer mortality: individual participant pooled analysis of 50 225 walkers from 11 population British cohorts](#): Walking briskly could reduce risk for all-cause and CVD mortality.
4. [Pedometer-driven walking for Chronic Low Back Pain: A Feasibility Randomised Controlled Trial / Walking Exercise for Chronic Musculoskeletal Pain: Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis / Supervised walking in comparison with fitness training for chronic back pain in physiotherapy: results of the SWIFT single-blinded randomized controlled trial](#): Those with painful musculoskeletal conditions (low back pain, osteoarthritis and fibromyalgia) can safely increase their walking gradually in order to meet the physical activity guidelines. Walking can reduce pain and increase functional ability in those with musculoskeletal disorders

Key points from the evidence:

- Can meet the Physical activity guidelines of 150 mins per week by walking briskly.
- There is no minimum amount of physical activity required to achieve some health benefit, every minute of brisk walking counts
- Moderate intensity is ‘being able to talk but not sing’
- Speed as well the amount of walking is important. Walking briskly compared to slow walking appears to protect the heart and reduces the risk of other causes of death.
- Walking is safe and can reduce pain and improve daily function in people with painful conditions such as low back pain and osteoarthritis.

Barry Holmes

Director of Human Resources

#RCSIttogether Minding Others

Age Actions' Getting Started **KIT** supports older people to **Keep In Touch** with their loved ones during the Covid-19 pandemic. We all are feeling the effects of social distancing, and older people are particularly impacted. Learning to make a video call or download a new app can help family and friends connect in new ways. The KIT offers easy how to guides that support older people to confidently use smartphones and applications. You can [download the guides](#) or call 01 8730372 to have Age Action post the KIT.

#RCSIttogether Minding Yourself

As we adjust to our temporary new normal of remote working, physical distancing and constantly evolving updates about Covid-19, now more than ever, we all need to be more mindful of how much alcohol we are drinking and the impact this may be having on our mental and physical wellbeing. While having a drink or two to unwind or virtually socialise is something many of us enjoy, drinking to cope with feelings of anxiety, stress or loneliness is likely to have the opposite effect. Alcohol Action Ireland provide information and practical advice on alcohol and your mental health. They have developed a guide on how to foster healthy coping tools that will last long beyond COVID-19 while observing a healthy relationship with alcohol, you can view these [here](#).

Another important aspect of coping with the stress of the current environment is to ensure you still take adequate rest and relaxation throughout the year. Usually we would begin to book time off for summer holidays around now. While the vacation plans may have to change, it is still really important to take time away from work to unwind. We are all juggling a lot at the moment, between managing workloads and caring responsibilities along with the stresses of this new and evolving situation. Taking time for ourselves to replenish will ensure we are not pouring from an empty cup. We also have a legal obligation to ensure our people are taking adequate periods of rest and relaxation so even if we can't head off to sunnier climes I would encourage you to please consider taking some holiday days over the coming weeks.

Finally, no poem this week but a beautiful image, from one of RCSI's top photographers, of the College from St Stephens Green to remind us of the wonderful place that we all work.

Have a great weekend and stay safe

Barry and the HR Team

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