



Cork City Public Participation Network,

St Josephs Community Association

Old Youghal Road,

Cork City

Cork City 05/09/23

For Immediate Release

Cork City Public Participation Network (PPN) calls on policymakers to consider the results of the research on a Medically Supervised Injecting Facility for Cork City.

At a recent Community Safety Linkage Group meeting, Public Participation Network members called on policymakers to consider the results of upcoming UCC Research on the need for a Medically Supervised Injecting Facility (MSIF) in Cork City and fund accordingly any measures suggested. David Lane (HSE) spoke of the journey taken by officials and public representatives to Portugal to witness Lisbon's Medically Supervised Injecting Facility. On the return from the trip, UCC was contracted to carry out independent research on whether there is a need for such a facility in Cork City.

City residents were given an opportunity to raise concerns with Mr. Lane. They learned that where these services were put in place, deaths from overdose plummeted, blood-borne illnesses reduced, and people experiencing addiction could tie in other services such as addiction recovery and family support services. For the local communities, there is a reduction in injecting equipment on streets, and vulnerable, ill people in the community could get access to the support they need.

At present, a Medically Supervised Injecting Facility (MSIF) for Cork City is not in the Programme for Government, so PPN Members have called on policymakers to address this and fund appropriately if the research shows a need for such a facility for Cork City.

The Community Safety Linkage Group Chair, Laura O'Connell, thanked David Lane for speaking at the meeting and said;

"Tonight, we facilitated a conversation where city residents and community groups were empowered to raise their concerns. They felt heard and engaged with and, in response, learned the evidence in relation to Medically Supervised Injecting Facilities. But it went

further, our members expressed a need to highlight the humanity of people experiencing addiction, with one participant saying, “They are us; we are they.””

The Community Safety Linkage Group has asked Mr. Lane to return and speak to the group once the UCC research has been completed in early 2024.

[Ends]

About the Cork City Public Participation Network

Public Participation Networks are a participatory mechanism that give community groups in every local authority area a greater say in how the local authority is run. They were legislated for in the Local Government Reform Act 2014 and are the go-to and mandated place for councils to seek input from community groups.

Cork City Public Participation Network has over 200 member groups ranging in size from small residence associations to large charities. They operate five linkage groups which give member groups an opportunity to come together and discuss issues facing the communities of Cork City. The Community Safety Linkage Group gives our Joint Policing Committee (JPC) Representatives support and a way to gauge the opinions of PPN member groups and inform their work on this decision-making committee.

Cork City Public Participation Network is free to join and is open to not-for-profit and volunteer-run groups based in Cork City. They are jointly funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development and Cork City Council. To find out more go to:

<https://www.corkcityppn.ie/>

Contact:

Orla Burke

PPN Coordinator

coordinator@corkcityppn.ie

085 1344 605