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Covid had devastating and disproportionate impact on Galway's Traveller community

BY DECLAN VARLEY

Covid-19 has had a disproportionate and potentially devastating long-term impact on the health and wellbeing of the Traveller Community in Galway city and county, according to assessments and reports compiled by the Galway Traveller Movement.

The inability to adequately social distance, plus the digital divide which prevented any coherent home-schooling were also cited as reasons while the community felt the effect of the virus much more than settled communities.

Reports compiled since April 2020 show many members of the Traveller community living in substandard and overcrowded conditions found it nearly impossible to self-isolate or follow public health advice when necessary to help prevent the spread of the virus.

Many Travellers lacked access to essential amenities to keep safe and healthy, including running water, sufficient sanitary facilities, or a reliable and constant supply of electricity.

These issues were discussed at a Galway Traveller

Movement (GTM) and Galway Traveller Community co-hosted workshop on Tuesday called Build Homes, Build Health, Build Hope, with special guests Dr Michael Ryan, Executive Director, World Health Organisation Health Emergencies Programme and Dr. Aileen Kitching, Consultant in Public Health for the Galway area.

Martin Ward, Joint Co-ordinator of GTM told the workshop that the inequities that existed across the social determinants of health made living with Covid particularly difficult for the Traveller community. Social determinants of health are the non-medical factors such as housing, education, employment, social protection and racism, for example. Research shows that they have a greater influence on the long-term health and life outcomes of people than lifestyle choices or medical factors.

There was more emphasis on people's personal responsibility to stay safe rather than focusing on the failures of services to provide adequate amenities to ensure that vulnerable communities were protected, according to Martin Ward, Joint Co-ordinator of GTM.

Full report contained inside on page 12



Trainer Ado McGuinness poses for a portrait as his horses take to the gallops at South Beach in Rush, Co. Dublin as they gear up for the iconic Galway Races Summer Festival that takes place from Monday July 26 to Sunday August 1.

Photo by David Fitzgerald/Sportsfile

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HEALTH & Fitness



Studying nutrition at CNM changed my life

AISLING KELLY, CNM NUTRITION GRADUATE

I now have financial freedom and a flexible work schedule which is key for me as a single mum - I'm able to support myself financially and work around my family.

I was a Montessori teacher for years but I decided to change careers as the job became more focussed on paperwork, instead of being interactive with kids. Food and helping people are two passions of mine - studying nutrition allowed me to do both.

The College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) always stood out to me at events, I loved their ethos and the Naturopathic Nutrition diploma is unlike other courses. CNM offers flexible courses that can be studied in-class on the weekends, which allowed me to continue working and fit study around my family.

Undertaking clinical experience during my studies was key in helping me to gain confidence as a practitioner. CNM's lecturers are so supportive and knowledgeable; being guided by their clinical experiences was phenomenal.

My job as therapist is incredibly varied. I work in a holistic health centre doing private one-to-one consultations where I specialise in digestive issues, skin health, inflammation and weight loss. I also run corporate talks and events for SME's and hold the position of Director of Studies for CNM Cork which is such a rewarding job.

Working for myself gives me the

Aisling Kelly



flexibility to choose my own work schedule. I'm also able to work in the evenings so I can be around for my family during the day.

My advice to anyone thinking about studying nutrition is - go for it. I held back from studying for years due to finances; I had no money but I found a way to follow my dream! The skills and training you get on the CNM Naturopathic Nutrition diploma are invaluable and completely lifechanging.

Galway nurse takes the worry out of teenage periods

Galway based brand Nixx is the first in Ireland to launch a cutting edge range of reusable, leak-proof teen period underwear to help the 60 per cent of Irish girls who are embarrassed by their periods. A recent study by Plan International Ireland on period stigma among teen girls found that, aside from feelings of embarrassment, many miss days at school and feel less able to pay attention during their period.

Nixx founder Ellie Loftus, a nurse and mother to two girls, saw firsthand the anxiety young girls have about their periods and the fear they have about leaking through their clothes. In her experience, traditional sanitary products just did not alleviate those worries.

The ever expanding range of Nixx teen period underwear has been designed and tested in collaboration with teens, for teens. Nixx Nights were developed for teens

that are anxious about leaks when staying over with friends while Nixx Sport and Dance have been developed with moisture wicking bamboo to keep your teen safe from leaks while playing sport or dancing. The underwear has been designed to be discreet and look just like normal underwear to give teens confidence during their period. Nixx has also recently introduced period swimwear for teens to help them stay active and outdoors during the school holidays.

Ellie Loftus advises that being prepared for your daughter's first period can also have a hugely positive impact on how she perceives and copes with it going forward. With this in mind, the Nixx First Period Box contains all the items your child will need for her first period and beyond to make it a fun, positive experience rather than something to fear.

Find out more at www.nixxworld.com



Natural energy boosters

Evergreen Healthfoods top recommendations to help boost your energy levels naturally.

A balanced diet, exercise and sleep are the best ways to support your energy levels. But sometimes, that is not enough. When you feel you need an extra push, why not try a natural energy booster, designed to make you feel more alert without the crash.

Better you B12 boost oral spray

Vitamin B12 helps contribute to the reduction of tiredness and fatigue, normal energy metabolism and normal psychological function. Better You provides vitamin B12 in a convenient pill-free spray formula, allowing for quick entry to the bloodstream for ultimate bioavailability.

One nutrition power greens

This nutrient rich super food blend packed with energy yielding ingredients including broccoli, white cabbage, kale, spirulina, wheat grass, barley grass, and chlorella. It can be useful for every individual especially those who are vegan, busy professionals, sports enthusiasts/athletes and parents.



Ashwagandha (KSM-66 form)

Ashwagandha is both calming and energising. It helps to support normal levels of vigour and performance and can also help to enhance sports performance. It can help to support the body's resilience to stress. Fighting stress can deplete our energy levels greatly so ashwagandha can help to take the edge off here.

Solaris matcha green tea

Matcha tea is a great source of L-theanine which can help calm the mind and body in times of mild mental stress. Matcha has nine more times more beta-carotene than spinach. It gives an energy boost that is gently released over 3-6 hours. It also beats green tea with 10 times more antioxidants. Japanese monks have used

Matcha to remain calm and alert. Matcha can help you focus while calming your nervous system. This product can be used to make a delicious matcha latte with a milk of your choice. Add a little drop of honey or agave to sweeten.

Beetroot powder or juice

Beetroot is rich in nitrates, a natural vasodilator which opens up the blood vessels allowing oxygen and nutrients to flow around the body more freely. It can help to improve blood flow and boost stamina. Try adding it to smoothies or protein shakes for an extra energy boost.

Take time To improve your sleep

If we are sleeping poorly, we simply cannot compensate for that in any way, but we can help by creating a good nighttime routine. Add in a cup of valerian tea or other nighttime teas or why not try Terranova Magnesium powder mixed in with a delicious hot chocolate. The ingredients in this product help to increase our bodies own melatonin production. Melatonin is a hormone released by the pineal gland at night which helps to control our sleep cycle.

For more information on how you can support your energy levels naturally, talk to one of Evergreen Healthfoods fully trained staff, email info@evergreen.ie or visit evergreen.ie/blog

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