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Pictured L-R: Dr Ciara Egan, Dr Helen Maher, James McCormack, Cathy Connolly, Rebecca Connolly, Gemma MacNally, Prof Pádraig MacNeela, John Hannon, Dr Sarah-Anne Buckely, Niamh Gallagher, Dr Declan Coogan, Niamh Kavanagh

## SHAREPOINT

Please visit our new committee SharePoint site for meeting minutes, Terms of Reference, updates, and more information.

[Available here.](#)

## CONTACTS

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## SUPPORTS

[A list of supports available to staff & students can be accessed here.](#)

If you would like more information or guidance on the supports available please email Rebecca in confidence.

## MEETING UPDATES:

### • Committee effectiveness survey shared.

During the April 2024 committee meeting, members participated in an effectiveness survey, sharing their thoughts on discussion subjects, themes, and the number of main committee and subgroup meetings. Survey results were shared at the June 2024 meeting, where a new meeting structure was proposed and discussed. It was also noted that further participation of the committee would be integrated into the committee plans and considered during strategic development in Autumn 2024.

### • Sexual Violence & Harassment Policy

The second draft of the SVH policy was shared. To date critical inputs have been gathered through 4 workshops with the policy development group, over 30 individual stakeholder meetings/workshops and 6 executive committee meetings. This work is ongoing. University networks will be asked to provide feedback on Draft 2. Plans are in place to present the finalized document to UMT by October 2024. For further information, please contact Niamh Kavanagh.

### • Draft Education plan shared

A draft education plan was presented to committee members, including a breakdown in terms of their knowledge, awareness, and training needs for the four identified groups, (1) Experts, (2) Engaged, (3) Expected & (4) Everyone. A sample college's 4-year rollout plan was shared as an example. For further information, please contact Rebecca Connolly.

### • Thank you and best wishes

A huge thank you to all of our committee members for their continued work and commitment to addressing sexual violence and ensuring a safer university campus for our entire community to date.

An additional thank you to our outgoing Students' Union team: Dean Kenny, Raimey O'Boyle, Faye Ní Dhomhnaill, and Izzy Ó Tighearnán, Who have all been an incredible team to work with on many projects, such as Consent Week, policy & framework project, and SHAG Week over the past academic year. We also welcome our incoming Students' Union officers: Faye Ní Dhomhnaill, Tom Forde, Chloe Anderson, and Julieanne Ní Mhullaoidh.

# DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY? START HERE:

## DON'T

**DON'T ASK "WERE YOU DRUNK?/ARE YOU SURE?/ WHY DID YOU GO HOME WITH THEM?"** - THAT SOUNDS LIKE YOU THINK IT'S THEIR FAULT. TRY TO LISTEN WITHOUT JUDGEMENT.

**DON'T SAY THINGS LIKE "LL KILL THEM!"** - HEARING ABOUT SOMEONE'S NEGATIVE SEXUAL EXPERIENCE CAN BE UPSETTING - BUT TAKE A BREATH AND TRY TO FOCUS ON THEIR FEELINGS, INSTEAD OF YOUR OWN.

**DON'T RUSH THEM INTO SHARING ANYTHING THEY DON'T WANT TO** - THEY MIGHT JUST TELL YOU A BIT, OR THEY MAY TELL YOU THE WHOLE STORY.

**DON'T SAY "YOU HAVE TO REPORT IT!"** - PUSHING SOMEONE TO TAKE ACTION THEY DON'T WANT CAN BE DISEMPOWERING AND RE-TRAUMATISING.

## DO

**DO SAY "I BELIEVE YOU"** - OPENING UP ABOUT A NEGATIVE SEXUAL EXPERIENCE CAN BE STRESSFUL. LET THE PERSON KNOW YOU ARE LISTENING, YOU BELIEVE THEM AND WILL SUPPORT THEM.

**DO ASK "WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO NEXT?"** THEY MIGHT NOT KNOW WHAT THEY WANT TO DO RIGHT AWAY, BUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT NEEDS TO BE THEIR CHOICE.

**DO ASK "HOW CAN I HELP?"** YOU COULD OFFER TO FIND OUT ABOUT SUPPORT SERVICES LIKE STUDENT COUNSELLING, SU WELFARE OFFICER, THE LOCAL RAPE CRISIS CENTRE OR SEXUAL ASSAULT TREATMENT UNIT. EVEN JUST LISTENING TO THE PERSON CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE.

**DO LOOK AFTER YOURSELF** - HEARING ABOUT SOMEONE'S NEGATIVE SEXUAL EXPERIENCE CAN BE VERY DIFFICULT. MAKE TIME FOR YOUR OWN SELF-CARE AND MENTAL WELLBEING.

# AWARENESS CAMPAIGN: 'START HERE'

In collaboration with the Active\* Consent team, the SVHPR team are re-launching "Start Here," the peer-to-peer disclosure campaign.

"Start Here" was developed in response to Active\* Consent and USI's 2020 National Sexual Experiences Survey, which revealed that 79% of college students who disclose sexual misconduct (rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment) told a close friend. We want everyone on campus to know what to say and where to go for support if someone discloses to them.

Printed cards with tips and UG supports, stickers, posters, social media posts will be available for the campaign. To get involved, please contact Rebecca. [To learn more, please see here.](#)



## JUNE IS PRIDE MONTH

Pride Month is an opportunity to celebrate the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and Intersex (LGBTQI+) community. It is a time to celebrate their experiences, their contributions, and the impact they have had on history, nationally and internationally. Pride is celebrated each June in honour of the 1969 Stonewall Uprising, led by Marsha P. Johnson, an African-American transgender woman. This was a seminal event in LGBTQI+ history, which marked a turning point in the community's activism. This group is at particular risk of experiencing sexual violence and harassment which must be considered in our work.

In addition to the supports linked, the below are useful resources.

- [Home - LGBT Ireland](#)
- [Outhouse LGBTQ+ Centre](#)
- [ShoutOut](#)



## IN THE NEWS:

[Domestic Abuse Disclosures at a Record High in 2023, according to Women's Aid. - Women's Aid \(womensaid.ie\)](#)

[Sex For Rent Exploitation happening across the country; affecting the most marginalised women: NWC » Latest News » The National Women's Council of Ireland \(nwci.ie\)](#)

[McEntee hails Limerick attack survivor for speaking out \(rte.ie\)](#)



## SPEAKOUT

Speak Out is an online anonymous reporting tool available to all students and staff to disclose incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, discrimination, hate crime, coercive behaviour / control, stalking, assault, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and rape.

The information you provide using this tool is valuable as the data collated will help inform initiatives aimed at addressing bullying, harassment and ending sexual violence and harassment at the University of Galway.

It is important to remember that as the Speak Out reporting tool is completely anonymous, there is no way of identifying or contacting any member of the university community who uses the tool.

## SAFEZONE APP

The safety and wellbeing of students and staff is our top priority at the University of Galway. We have introduced a free smartphone app that promotes staff and student safety across all of our campuses.

[SafeZone](#) enables users to call for help and assistance when they need it most, giving you fast access to security whenever and wherever you are on campus, and allows the University to send notifications to users, e.g. in the event of severe weather or building closure.

SafeZone also allows you to easily check in and share your location on campus.

The app is now available to download from the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#).

