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Launch of “Equal Right to Health for all”

People living in poverty die younger

The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and wellbeing of themselves and their family”. However, this right is being denied to people living in poverty and social exclusion. The urgent call to address this denial of human rights was made by the Community Platform which today launches its public awareness campaign entitled “**Equal right to health for all**”.

On Universal Health Coverage Day the Community Platform, a network of 27 national organisations working together to address poverty and inequality, has produced a leaflet and poster which highlight the worse levels of health for people living in disadvantaged areas and those experiencing poverty, social exclusion and inequality. The shocking facts include:

- Living in a disadvantaged area means...
 - ... you will die younger. Men die 4.3 years earlier and women die 2.7 years earlier compared to affluent areas.
 - ... you have a 39% higher chance of dying from cancer.
 - ... you are three times more likely to have severe depression.
- Traveller men die 15.1 years earlier than the general population and Traveller women die 11.5 years earlier.
- 345 homeless people died in the Dublin region between 2005-2015.

Paul Ginnell, a spokesperson for the Community Platform said that “It is unacceptable that we live in a wealthy society where the quality of your health and wellbeing is so strongly determined by your background or the amount of money you have. We are calling on the Government to address the causes of poor health and inequality and build a more inclusive health service”.

Pierre Klein, coordinator of All Together in Dignity and member of the Community Platform said “Last December the Platform published six principles for an inclusive Health policy and the delivery on these principles are crucial if the Government wants to deliver a high level of health and wellbeing for everyone. In June this year, with many members of the Platform and with people who experience strongly health inequalities with discussed these principles and the content of the Sláintecare report. Today we need action and even more participation of the members of deprived communities.”

Mr Ginnell concluded “We are specifically calling on the Government to move as quickly as possible to implement the all-party Sláintecare report which would reform the health service over the next ten years. This is critical to bringing about the change that is needed but it must be implemented in a way which ensures that no-one in society is denied their right to health”.

Ends

Contact: Paul Ginnell 087 640 2200 or Pierre Klein 089-4401523

Further Information

- The **Equal right to health for all** leaflet and poster can be downloaded [here](#).
- The Community Platform [Six principles for an inclusive health policy](#)
 1. The State takes responsibility for delivering the right to a high level of health and wellbeing for all. All social, economic and environmental policies will promote this right by identifying and addressing the social determinants of health across all Government Departments and policy through undertaking health and health equity assessments.
 2. Adequate resources are available to develop a universal, publically funded healthcare system, free at the point of access.
 3. A fully functioning primary and community healthcare service is a core part of the health system and the first point of contact for most people.
 4. Everyone has equal access to high quality healthcare. This should be regardless of socio-economic status, gender, civil or family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community. There should be a requirement to pay particular attention to groups or sections of society where health and wellbeing is below that of the rest of the population.
 5. Everyone is able to participate in the design, implementation and evaluation of all health policies and programmes and be empowered to claim and enforce their right to health and wellbeing. Members of groups experiencing the highest levels of health inequalities and their organisations will need particular supports to achieve this.
 6. The State defines its responsibilities in relation to the health of people beyond its borders, including through:
 - pooling and allocating resources to health;
 - ensuring adequate investment in research and development; and
 - not harming the health of people in other countries (for example, as a result of pollution and climate change)
- Universal Health Coverage Day 12.12.2017 <http://universalhealthcoverageday.org/>

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The Community Platform is a network of 27 national networks and organisations in the community and voluntary sector working to address poverty, social exclusion and inequality.

- Age Action Ireland
- All Together in Dignity (ATD) Ireland
- Community Action Network
- Community Work Ireland
- Cairde
- Debt and Development Coalition
- European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) Ireland
- Focus Ireland
- Immigrant Council of Ireland
- Irish National Organisation of the Unemployed
- Irish Penal Reform Trust
- Irish Refugee Council
- Irish Rural Link
- Irish Traveller Movement
- Migrant Rights Centre Ireland
- National Adult Literacy Agency
- National Collective of Community-based Women's Networks
- National Traveller Women's Forum
- National Women's Council of Ireland
- Pavee Point
- Rape Crisis Network Ireland
- Safe Ireland
- Sign Language Interpreting Service
- Simon Communities of Ireland
- Threshold
- Vincentian Partnership for Justice
- Women's Aid