

PALs Newsletter

Winter 2023

We are delighted to reintroduce our PALs newsletter. The best way to keep up to date with everything that's happening all around Ireland for both PALs and CarePALs.

At Age & Opportunity, our Active Team are already looking forward to an exciting year in 2024 supporting more older people to get more physically active, but first, let's reflect on what a fantastic year 2023 has been.

PALs Workshops

With support from our partners, we had another successful year of expanding our network of PALs and have delivered PALs training to 79 new PALs across 6 counties i.e., Kerry, Longford, Dublin, Louth, Galway and Clare. The groups have shown so much enthusiasm and delight, to be meeting in person once again.

Based on your feedback we have made a change to the PALs workshops so that now a series consists of 6 condensed workshops instead of 8. Our aim is to make the workshops more accessible so that we can increase the number of PALs across Ireland.

It is important to note you do not need any physical training background to become a PAL just a keen interest in leading your group in physical activity. If you know of anyone interested in becoming a PAL in 2024, please ask them to contact:

Máire Murphy (PALS Coordinator) at maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie



(Photo of our new Kerry PALs, 2023)

Reconnect Workshops

In Autumn of this year, we introduced Reconnect workshops which are open to all PALs. This workshop takes place over one morning and has been set up as a way of staying connected with our existing network of PALs and to better understand how we can support you and your groups to stay physically active.

The Reconnect workshops offer valuable insight into how the groups are functioning

post-covid and allow us to better understand and address issues you might be facing as a PAL. We have hosted reconnect workshops in Kerry, Cork, Dublin and Tipperary so far this year and hope to reconnect with more of you in 2024.

The Reconnect workshops have allowed PALs to come together and develop their sense of community, exchange ideas and try out new games and activities. We would love the opportunity to meet all our PALs that are doing such fantastic work all across Ireland and we will be in touch to invite you to a Reconnect workshop near you in 2024.



(Tipperary Reconnect workshop, November 2023)

National Go for Life Games 2024

Age & Opportunity are delighted to announce that the Go for Life Games are returning in 2024. The National Games

takes place on Saturday the 8th of June 2024 in DCU Sports Centre, Dublin 9. The National Games invites teams from every county to come together to play the games of Scidils, Flisk and Málái and is one of the biggest social sports events for older people in Ireland. It will be a fantastic event and a great way to connect with other members of your community, meet others and have some friendly competition. So, start getting ready and get in contact with ourselves or your Local Sports Partnership if you would like to get involved.

National Active Grants Scheme 2024

The National Active Grants Scheme 2024 will open for applications at the end of January 2024. Grants are available to all eligible local clubs, groups, care settings and organisations that promote increased participation in recreational sports or physical activities for older people as a main element of their activities. Keep an eye on our website for more information, www.ageandopportunity.ie

CarePALs

Thanks to continued support from the HSE, the CarePALs workshops have continued to run very successfully throughout 2023. CarePALs is our 2-day workshop geared towards those working in daycare or residential settings. It is a fantastic workshop that supports staff to develop the skills to lead fun, physical activities with those in their care. We have trained 225 CarePALs in 2023 across all regions and we look forward to further expanding the number of CarePALs nationally in 2024.



Kerry CarePALs 2023

Active Team 'New Kids on the Block'

In 2023, we have seen a lot of change within our Active Team. We have welcomed a new Active Team Assistant Manager, Nicole Evans. We have also appointed Máire Murphy to the new position of PALs Coordinator. The creation of this new role will put us in a better position to connect and further support our fantastic network of PALs and CarePALs. We also welcome Philip Duffy as our new Active Administrator.

The FitLine Initiative has also added two new team members, Meg Hegarty is our FitLine Coordinator and the newest addition to the team, Cathy Ginty, the Fitline Administrator. Sue Guildea remains as the Active Programme Manager. We

look forward to an exciting new year ahead.

Merry Christmas

The Active Team along with everyone in Age & Opportunity would like to wish you all a Happy Christmas and wonderful New Year. With a special mention of our wonderful team of trainers who help us deliver our workshops and various initiatives throughout the year and our partners particularly the Local Sports Partnerships whose support is paramount to what we do.

We also invite you to please get in touch with us if you have any news or stories from your group that you would like to share with our network of PALs by including them in our next newsletter in the Spring. From our survey we confirmed that we have approximately 400 PALs nationally, so we look forward to hearing from you in 2024

For further information on the National Grants Scheme or the National Go For Life Games please contact active@ageandopportunity.ie or Phone [018057733](tel:018057733). If you would like more information on any of our PALs initiatives please contact PALs coordinator maire.murphy@ageandopportunity.ie or Phone 018057733