

Seirbhís Phríosúin na hÉireann Irish Prison Service Crois Dhearg na hÉireann Irish Red Cross



CBHFA Response to COVID-19

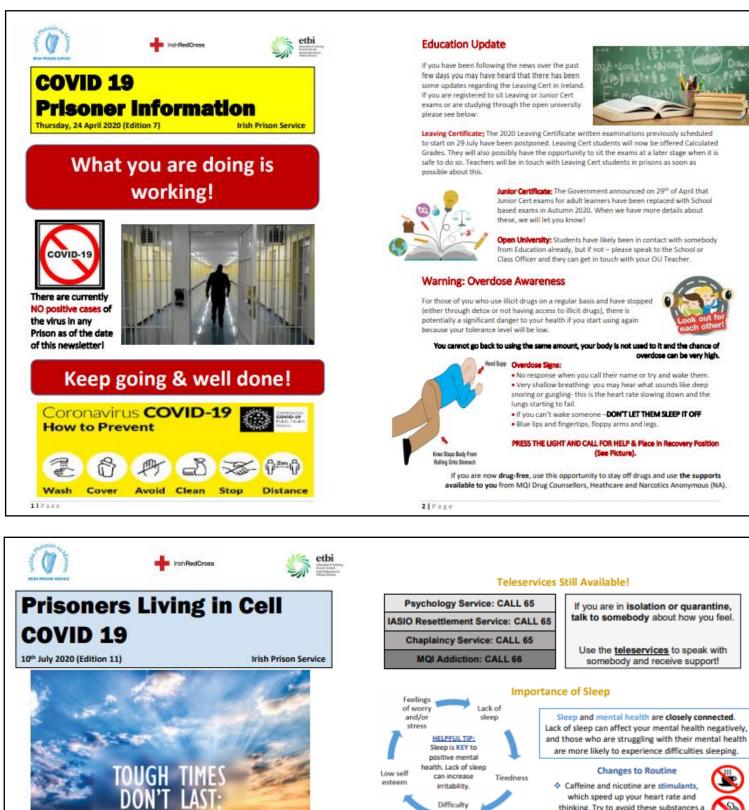
Irish Red Cross inmate volunteers are trained in Infection Control as part of the Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) Programme every year. More specifically, every year inmate volunteers learn proper hand-washing techniques, correct sneezing and coughing etiquette, and in all prisons a colour coded bucket and mop system has been introduced. This has all contributed to cleaner prisons and a prevention of infection. The volunteers then disseminate this information to their peers within their prison community through awareness campaigns and landing demonstrations.

Before the coronavirus landed in Ireland, volunteers learned about the symptoms of the virus and the dangers that it carried. Volunteers were able to use this knowledge to **peer educate** the rest of their prison community before the virus began to spread in Ireland. Furthermore, this allowed for each prison population to be prepared and apply effective infection control measures in their daily routines. As the virus became more serious and the country went into lockdown, supports that the volunteers would usually have (such as teachers, psychologists, chaplains and addiction counsellors) were no longer able to enter the prisons. Therefore, the Irish Red Cross inmate volunteers took a very strong leadership role to assist Irish Prison Service staff with the challenges of COVID-19. Volunteers continued to educate their peers in effective infection control measures, spoke to inmates facing mental health challenges, assisted with the distribution of information and education packs, and did their best to keep up positive morale throughout each of the prisons.

Irish Red Cross also introduced two separate newsletters to be distributed to prisoners each week; (1) COVID-19 Prisoner Information Newsletter; and (2) Living in Cell Newsletter. All prisoners received the information newsletter each week, and those cocooning, isolating and in quarantine received the Living in Cell newsletter in addition to the weekly COVID-19 newsletter. This provided prisoners with updated information in regards to COVID-19, education, and services they could access, in addition to exercises and activities they could do during this time. Irish Red Cross inmate volunteers assisted with translating the newsletters in several languages and distributed these newsletters every week to the rest of their prison communities.

The activities of the Irish Red Cross inmate volunteers help to contribute to zero positive cases amongst prisoners across the country for more than six months.

* See below for examples of the COVID-19 General Information Newsletter and the Living in Cell Newsletter.





Not Forgetting You!

This week's Newsletter includes exercises that you can do while Living in Cell, as well as helpful tips to help you cope with frustration and anxiety during this time.

The next edition of this newsletter will be distributed on Friday 24 July.

he rer

coping with daily

life

Newly committed prisoners who are quarantined as a

precaution will be tested approximately 6 days after committal.

Physical Activity

help people fall asleep

faster, spend more time in

a deep sleep, and awaken

less during the night.

Regular physical activity can

If you are required to undertake a Section 42 Garda escort, so long as you maintain your PPE at all times on that escort, you will be permitted to return to the stage you were at in terms of your quarantine. If, however, you do not aintain your PPE or if there is any concern that m this may not have happened, you will be returned to Day 1 of quarantine.

If the test returns a negative result, the prisoner will oved from guarantine, so long as the prisoner has no flu-like symptoms and/or has not been identified as a close contact of a confirmed case



exercises, and progressive muscle relaxation exercises can counter anxiety and racing thoughts. Try using

few hours before trying to fall asleep

exercises from previous newsletters.

Relaxation Techniques Meditation, yoga, deep breathing

New Testing & Quarantine Arrangements