

Living Well: A Public Conversation on Health, Wellbeing and Obesity

Healthy tips for everyone

Time	Title	Speaker
17:30 – 18:00	Registration	
18:00 – 18:05	Welcome Address	Prof Anthony O'Regan, President, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
18:05 – 19:30	Panel Discussion	Chair: Alison O'Connor with Prof Donal O'Shea, Dr Ximena Ramos Salas, Orla Walsh RD., Mike Murphy and Susie Birney

SPEAKERS



Chair: Alison O'Connor

Alison O'Connor is a journalist, broadcaster and author. She writes a weekly column for The Sunday Times. As a current affairs commentator she appears regularly on radio and television. She has worked previously as a political correspondent for The Irish Times and Irish Independent, as well as a columnist for The Irish Examiner and Business Post.



Professor Donal O'Shea

Donal qualified from University College Dublin in 1989 and then moved to Hammersmith Hospital in London. He completed research with Professor Sir Stephen Bloom on how the brain controls appetite. He moved to his current position establishing the first hospital-based multidisciplinary treatment unit for the management of adult obesity in the country. Donal is a member of the Department of Health policy group on obesity established in 2011 and chaired a group carrying out a health impact assessment on the potential benefits and harms of a tax on sugar sweetened drinks. He has presented to the EU Ministers for Health and the Director General of the WHO on the importance of prevention of childhood obesity. His specific research interests are in gender issues as well as obesity and has published over 200 research papers. He was previously National Lead for Management of Obesity with the HSE.



Dr Ximena Ramos Salas

Ximena Ramos Salas is an Affiliated Researcher in the Department of Psychology at Lund University in Lund, Sweden, and the Chair of Bias 180, a global non-profit organization based in Canada with a mandate to address chronic disease stigma. She holds a PhD in Public Health with a specialization in Health Promotion and Socio-Behavioural Sciences from the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, and is a global expert on obesity and weight stigma. She has published scientific articles and lectured widely on obesity prevention and management, weight bias and stigma, health inequalities, and person-centred healthcare and policies. She has also contributed to many government reports, action plans, and policy briefs on weight bias and obesity stigma, including the report entitled Weight Bias and Obesity Stigma: Considerations for the WHO European Region. Ximena coordinated the process that created the 2020 Canadian clinical practice guidelines for the management of obesity in adults (which included recommendations to reduce weight stigma in healthcare), the international adaptation of the Canadian clinical practice guidelines in Chile and Ireland, and supported the development of the clinical practice guidelines for adult obesity in Mexico and the pharmacotherapy guidance for adult obesity in the US. Born in Chile, Ximena is a Canadian citizen currently living in Sweden.



Orla Walsh

Orla Walsh is a Registered Dietitian and Physiologist, and the founder of Orla Walsh Nutrition, Ireland's leading dietetic and nutrition clinic. Having initially graduated from Trinity College Dublin with a BA in Physiology, Orla subsequently continued to quench her thirst for knowledge by following that up with a PgDip in Dietetics, an MSc in Clinical Nutrition, a PgDip in Sports & Exercise Nutrition and an MA in Physiology. Orla is the former Head Performance Dietitian with Athletics Ireland and consultant to the Irish Institute of Sport where she worked with many athletes in the build up to the Rio Olympics. She has written for the Irish Independent since 2016 and is a regular contributor to other national media outlets across print, TV and radio. Orla also runs a number of active social media accounts across multiple platforms, while also running her healthy living blog and providing countless recipes for people to learn from. Orla is passionate about anything related to health, science, food, exercise and everything to do with the great outdoors.



Susie Birney

Susie Birney is an obesity patient advocate from Dublin, Ireland. Living with obesity and other NCD's with the support of a multi-disciplinary team and treatment, she has seen a vast improvement in her quality of life. Nationally, Susie is the Executive Director of the Irish Coalition for People Living with Obesity (ICPO) and sits as a patient representative with the Association for the studies of Obesity Ireland (ASOI). Susie is involved in European patient advocacy through her role within the European Coalition for People Living with Obesity (ECPO). She represents the patient perspective at conferences, with policymakers, clinicians, researchers, and partner organisations across Europe. Susie is recognised for her commitment to amplifying the voices of people living with obesity and for challenging stigma. Susie co-founded and leads the stigma education training for healthcare students. This training has developed and been presented to undergraduate/post graduate students, the Department of Health, the National Maternity Hospital and other National health organisations. Susie is a passionate advocate for recognising obesity as a chronic, relapsing disease and speaks with emphasis on people-first language, respect, and dignity in both healthcare settings and public discourse and for reducing stigma for people living with obesity. With experience in both patient advocacy and peer support, Susie brings her lived experience to policy, education, and public engagement. Representing the lived experience at the European Parliament, Susie has not hesitated to ensure patient and public Involvement is truly embedded and valued at all stages in these discussions.



Mike Murphy

Mike Murphy is the Head Physiotherapist at RAPID and the Founder of Masters Program Ireland. He earned his B.Sc. in Physiotherapy from Trinity College Dublin before completing his M.Sc. in Sports and Exercise Medicine from Trinity also. Mike founded RAPID in 2020 and has been growing the clinic ever since. RAPID now has 5 full time physiotherapists, over 450 5 star reviews and has helped 1000's of patients to find their problem, fix their pain and improve their performance. Mike founded the physiotherapist-led Masters Program in 2021 which has grown significantly over the past few years. The Masters Program is a strength and rehabilitation class for older adults, keeping them strong, active, healthy and pain free as they age. Many Master's Program members join the Program to maintain and gain muscle mass and bone mineral density, getting Fitter, and not Frailer, as they age. The Masters Program has over 50 classes per week and is attended by over 350 members. The slogan for the class is 'Use It Or Lose It' which is embodied by so many of their incredible members.